

Local Government SERVICE

**ARE LOCAL
AUTHORITIES
EFFICIENT?**

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THREEPENCE

"CIRCULARITIS"

THE letter from "City Engineer" on wartime government by circular, published in our correspondence columns this month, will arouse strong sympathy in all circles of local government. His picture of "waste" and "costly blunders" may be overdrawn. His remedies may be too Draconian. He may, indeed, be suspected of exaggerating deliberately, to give vent to his feeling and to show how strong that feeling is. There is, however, little exaggeration in his idea of the extent to which government by circular has gone in wartime, or in his vision of the never-ending blast of paper which descends upon local authorities and their officers, and which grows rather than dwindles. If he voices truly the feelings of the average engineer, as we believe he does, what must be the feelings of the average clerk or treasurer? The clerk sustains the whole broadside, fired from all points of the departmental compass. He himself is, in many instances, the officer of whom action is required. Even when this is not so, he commonly has the responsibility of knowing and co-ordinating the action to be taken by other officers. As for the treasurer, even in the rare instances where circulars do not involve financial arrangements under his direct responsibility, he must still know what action the circulars require of executive officers if he is to be equipped for his functions of financial control, audit, and claims for grant.

"Paper" issued on such a scale tends to defeat its own objects. It must frequently be impossible for a chief officer to keep up with his daily post-bag. He must often be forced to resort to a "reviewer's sample," and to decide on that basis alone which of the circulars require personal attention and which must be delegated forthwith, to avoid a "bottle-neck." A fuller study must be postponed to the Sabbath hour—not, be it noted, the evening hour, since in these days the officer is then still at his office desk, or, it may be, beginning that second day's work on the same date which accrues wherever committees meet in the evening. This fuller perusal will relate to the usual crop of problems, ambiguities, and requests for interpretation brought up by staff to whom delegations were made.

Problem of Priority

THERE appears to be no one in government circles who can measure the total impact of all departmental circulars on the local authorities or who thinks it necessary to try to do so, or to programme the competing demands of several departments for action "by the — instant." One would have thought that the relative degrees of urgency to be assigned to all the tasks which have been thrust upon local authorities would have formed one of the most appropriate and most useful themes on which circular instruction could be given. But on this, as on many of the more difficult problems underlying the action required, circulars are silent. The

view may be that a difficult problem like that of priorities is one that is best (and no doubt conveniently) left to local discretion and judgment. At any rate, no small part of the local chief officer's task resolves itself into deciding for himself what priorities should rule, and advising his council accordingly. Both officers and council may be relied upon to exercise their best judgment in such a position,

working through local agencies; and although the public does not acquire a close knowledge of its incidence and extent in large scale private business, it cannot there be absent. Bank managers, insurance managers, and the managers of multiple stores might, if they would speak, have a tale to tell not very different from that of councillors and local government officers, though, to be sure, not of the same magnitude.

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and their best will spring from a long experience of shouldering new organising tasks, and from a close knowledge of local conditions and requirements. They should not in such circumstances be subjected unduly to the precipitous inquiries of unknowledgeable temporary subordinates in government departments for a written report on the action taken under circular so-and-so.

System Necessary, But—

HOWEVER strongly they feel at times, local government officers are capable of a balanced view of this subject. They recognize that government by circular is bound to be a feature of wartime administration. Wartime services are intrinsically of a kind which involves central control. Policy must be nationally conceived, and adopted with national responsibility; and once so conceived and adopted, it must be communicated and explained to those who, like the local authorities, are the principal agents for applying it. If this were not done, the local authorities and their officers would have bigger complaints to raise than any they make at the moment; and it is difficult to see how this can be done otherwise than by circular. Indeed, government by circular is not an exclusive feature of wartime public administration. It becomes necessary in any national business

Control Too Rigid

GRANTED all this, need circulars extend as much as they do to meticulous prescription, or central control involve so many references to the departments on small items, or the submission of so many returns? The answer will be that the central government is paying by far the largest part of the bill, and has a duty to establish control over the levels of expenditure, to scrutinize its character, and to seek to establish uniform standards of both provision and financial assistance. The maxim that "Who pays the piper must call the tune," has suffered some violation of its pristine purity in wartime administration, but it is still a maxim dear to the heart of Whitehall, and it has indubitable virtue. It is sometimes said that our boasted local self-government has in recent years been disappearing under an encroaching central control. The truth is, rather, that the latter developments of pre-war local government, hardly less than its wartime tasks, have been of a kind in which the local authorities act as agents for the State, and they cannot claim the same measure of responsibility and discretion for these as attached to their original spheres of activity. But even in these services of "national" character, some via media must be found between the present rigidities of the system of financial control and the flexible requirements of effective and economic administration. One would be more hopeful of a solution if one could be surer that Whitehall had a livelier sense of the latter, and on the other hand, had seriously striven to assess the delays involved in its present system of control, and the man and woman power which the system both centrally and locally absorbs.

Civil Service Shortcomings

TWO questions remain after the necessity of circulars is admitted: do they represent good central planning and convey sound helpful and practical directions; and are they as clear and precise as they ought to be? "City Engineer" is dissatisfied with them on both scores. Allowance should obviously be made for temporary and inexperienced staff, and a pressure and volume of business which do not always allow of thorough attention to detail and carefulness of expression. Any dissatisfaction which remains after such allowance is made opens up questions relating to the whole system of departmental organisation, and the calibre of civil service personnel.

The fundamental issue which arises on the first question is whether the civil service has, for many years past, yielded the type of administrator which large new tasks of organisation call for. There is much in the established forms of civil service procedure which has prevented the civil servant from responding to the needs of the times; and the very character of the governmental machine has tended to cramp his initiative and readiness to take responsibility. There is no lack of brains in the civil service. Even, however, if a reform of departmental and civil service organisation and procedure might do much to improve matters, the question would still remain whether the average civil servant is equipped with the kind of knowledge, or provided with the opportunity of acquiring the type of experience, which are requisite to-day. The times when the local government officer was the academic inferior of the civil servant have nearly passed, if they have not already passed; and the local government service has been equipping itself with the range of knowledge related to its job, whereas the prior training of the civil service administrator is still largely academic.

The local government officer acquires "field" knowledge, and an appreciation of public psychology and reactions to the administrative process, which the civil servant is hardly in a position to acquire. Controlling local government as much as he does, the civil servant nevertheless lacks direct knowledge of its impacts, and is largely confined to the ambit of office work and papers. Mere mental ability, supplemented and tested as it no doubt is by high academic achievement, are not enough for public administration to-day. The civil servant must look to his laurels if he is not to be outstripped, and to be recognised as outstripped, by the modern local government officer, to whom the times have given an opportunity, which so far he has not been slow to grasp, of establishing himself in public esteem as an administrator adapted by knowledge and experience to handle new creative tasks.

"Plain English"

THE second question also raises wide issues. The multitude of men, in whatever walk of life, are neither gifted nor schooled in the arts of expression. It is curious that, although words are the most important things in the world, so little study is given to them. If it were suggested that a study of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, were among the most important elements of education, it is safe to say that the majority of those most tormented by the language of circulars would raise an outcry against "these useless studies." It is only those who devote most study to words who realise how turgid style can become under the pressure of technical jargon and the slipshod language in common use. To purify one's style to the ideals of precision and simplicity requires more than the will to do it; it is one of the last achievements of the conscious study and practice of composition.

In fact, simplicity and precision are to some extent opposed ideals. To be absolutely precise, one's language would inevitably take a shape which is familiar in the style of the legal draftsman, with its characteristic repetitions and qualifying and defining clauses. On the other hand, to be simple one must often be indefinite; and the "plain English" used by "plain men" in home-made wills and business documents sometimes encountered, has probably been more productive of doubt and dispute than any other kind of language. Again, the language of officials will always be drawn from a somewhat special vocabulary simply because it is so often their duty to avoid words of colour and feeling. The most fundamental of "City Engineer's" requirements are not likely to be met easily or soon; let

us hope he has stimulated all of us, civil servants, local government officers, and business men alike, to do a little better.

Hospitals of Tomorrow

WE hear a great deal today about coming changes in our hospital system, and many minds and organisations are thinking out and working for one proposal or another. All such—and indeed all interested in public health administration—will find much of value in a new Fabian Research Pamphlet, "The Hospital Services," by Somerville Hastings (Fabian Society, 11, Dartmouth Street, London, S.W.1—6d.).

The author is forthright in his criticisms of existing institutions and organisations and clear and definite in his suggestions for reform. At the base of his recommendations is the large general hospital of 500-1,000 beds, situated in or near a town and admitting patients from the surrounding districts, both urban and rural. Each hospital will not deal with every type of case, since it will be better to segregate the cases of some of the less common conditions in particular hospitals of a group, but it will accept patients suffering from all the ordinary diseases and disabilities. There will be no little special hospitals devoted to the care of some small part of the body.

As a background to the general hospital is placed the domiciliary medical service of salaried doctors who will see patients in their own homes or in health centres associated with the hospital. The salaried specialist staffs of the hospital will be available for consultations with the family doctors. The personal health services of the local health authority, such as the maternity and child welfare service, will be carried out at the hospital and the associated health centres.

A Regional System

FOR the general administration of the service it is suggested that England and Wales should be divided into about a dozen regions and that the administration and control of the service in each region should be in the hands of a Regional Health Board composed of representatives from all the local authorities in the Region.

At this point many readers will pause to think. Would such an indirectly elected council really be the most suitable body to entrust with such important powers? The proposed change is revolutionary and, if we are to have a revolution, we may as well tackle the whole question of local government areas—although one can understand the reluctance of the author to propose a recasting of English local government on health grounds alone.

The hospital will be staffed by whole-time salaried doctors and be free to all without regard to income. A high degree of centralisation in the general administration seems to be assumed.

It is obvious that in such a comprehensive scheme few voluntary hospitals can find a place, since most of them are limited in their interests and resources.

The teaching (voluntary) hospitals present a particular problem and it is suggested that, at least for a time, special arrangements should be made for them. As this is a concern merely of London and a few other cities, the general principles of the scheme are not disturbed.

Much of the space of the pamphlet is devoted to valuable suggestions for improvements that may be made by the association and co-operation of various agencies without any radical change in the law, but the ultimate aim is always kept in view.

Educating Future Citizens

IT was encouraging to hear the Brains Trust give such a boost the other day to the need for more instruction of youth in the workings of local government. Commander Campbell

plumped for it, when asked what subject the Brains Trust would recommend for inclusion in schemes for the training of young people of sixteen to eighteen about to register, confessing his own total ignorance of the administrative machine and its operation. Professor Joad immediately supported, declaring, amid a chorus of approval from his fellow Brains, that it was a national duty to teach young people how local government was carried on, and to encourage them to take part in it. "I think it is very much open to question," he added, "whether our local government has attracted the best, most vigorous, and most energetic people in the last hundred years."

This, of course, has long been a main plank in NALGO's public relations policy, but attempts to persuade schools to provide the training have met with small success. Local government is not in the curriculum of the School Certificate examinations and, therefore, does not exist! But the new training scheme for the 16-18's does provide an opportunity for giving the citizens of tomorrow a better grounding in the privileges—and duties—of democratic citizenship, and we trust that all concerned will take the fullest advantage of it.

What is an Adult?

NO, the above is not another question to the Brains Trust. It is directed, rather, to the members of the salaries and wages sub-committee of Wolverhampton county borough council.

On October 27 the council referred to this sub-committee a motion by Alderman Davies "that it be an instruction to all departments of the corporation that the minimum wage paid to all male adult wage-earners shall be 70s. per week."

The sub-committee considered this proposal and reported to the council on November 27 in the following terms:

That the salaries and wages sub-committee are of the opinion that a reasonable minimum weekly wage for the lowest-paid worker should be about 70s. per week. Your sub-committee are not, however, prepared to usurp the functions of the joint industrial councils, upon whom lies the responsibility of regulating wages and who alone possess the adequate knowledge of the varying circumstances in each case;

That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the secretary of each joint industrial council with the request that early consideration be given to this subject.

Nobody is likely to quarrel with that—except possibly the members of the Wolverhampton council and its salaries and wages sub-committee. For they appear to have forgotten two points:

The council's own scale for men clerks provides, not a *minimum* of 70s. a week for a man of 21, but a *maximum* of 46s. 1½d., and compels him to wait until he is 26 before he receives 70s.; and

The council has steadfastly refused to join the West Midlands provincial council.

The only conclusion one can draw is that in Wolverhampton a clerk is not adult until he reaches the age of 26, and that, in the view of Wolverhampton councillors, a joint industrial council is not a joint industrial council when it deals with the affairs of such abnormal beings.

What about it, Wolverhampton?

Churchill at Harrow

COLLECTORS of Churchilliana will be interested in a little book, "Winston Churchill and Harrow," recently published by the Harrow School Book Shop at 3s. 6d. In it, Mr. E. D. W. Chaplin has collected a sheaf of entertaining memories of the Prime Minister as a schoolboy. The book was inspired by Mr. Sydney Walton, for some years public relations adviser to NALGO, and president of Harrow Hospital, to which the entire proceeds from its sale are being devoted.

IS THE LOCAL AUTHORITY EFFICIENT?

By W. O. DODD, Deputy Town Clerk, Brighton

Mr. Dodd is a member of the National Executive Council and the National Whitley Council, vice-chairman of the South-Eastern District Committee, and chairman of the Southern Home Counties Provincial Council. In sending his article he wrote: "I have only one regret. In an article such as I have set out to write, and in one written by an official, there is no room for an appreciation of the untiring, devoted service of local government officers during the war, without which, particularly in the blitzed cities, the battles of Britain, the Atlantic, and further afield might have been fought in vain."

"THE existing municipal corporations of England and Wales neither possess nor deserve the confidence and respect of His Majesty's Subjects, and a thorough reform must be effected before they can become what they ought to be—useful and efficient instruments of Local Government."

I have placed that quotation in the forefront of these random thoughts on local government for it so aptly expresses what so many people are thinking, yet it was written over a hundred years ago. The phraseology is unusually pungent for a report of a Royal Commission. It bears the stamp of a political pamphlet, which in some respects it was. The result of two years' investigation was a report which ran to many volumes. The main subject was the same question, "Is the Local Authority Efficient?" In a short article, written without the knowledge so painstakingly obtained, it is only possible to touch the fringe of the subject here and there, generalities are inevitable, argument and explanation impossible. My aim, therefore, is to provoke thought rather than to state a case. The viewpoint is naturally that of an official but the view expressed is not necessarily my own, for the editor has asked me to stimulate thought amongst local government officers upon this problem, and indeed no single person could provide an adequate answer to the question. Hence, if you read on, you will find no carefully constructed indictment of local government, complete with schedules enumerating failures and shortcomings, and certainly I do not and cannot provide any ready-made solution. But for what they are worth, I have strung together widely divergent ideas on a number of aspects of local government which, if they cause you to think for yourself on one of the most important problems of this and future generations, will have served their purpose.

All Government Local

In an earlier civilisation it was stated that in the last resort all government is local, and this is equally true today. Health and hygiene, housing and town planning, transport and communications, employment and recreation, education and culture, these and many more, however broadly they may be planned, require local administration: nay, more, if they are to effect the greatest good of the greatest number, there must be in a large measure local government of them. Without local authorities, modern civilisation could not exist. Is it any wonder, then, that, blasted out of the lethargy and drift of pre-war days, many are pondering the question at the head of this article.

Professor Joad, in "Any Questions," has delighted many listeners and caused not a little amusement by his determination to have the subject matter of discussion defined. What then have we in mind by a local authority? A local authority is defined in the Local Government Act, 1933, as: "The Council of a county, county borough, non-county borough,

urban district or rural district." The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines "efficient" as: "Productive of effect, competent, capable." The question is then, "Are councils competent and capable in the manifold duties they are called upon to perform and are they productive of effect?" No one can deny that they produce effects. They affect the lives of every

SOME FAULTS—AND THE REMEDY

While offering no complete diagnosis, and hence no specific cure, of the faults of local government—"my aim," he explains, "is to promote thought rather than to state a case"—Mr. Dodd mentions five main factors responsible for inefficiency in administration today:

- Over-complexity of structure, leading to public apathy;
- Public apathy, leading to the election of incompetent councils;
- Incompetent councils, leading to ill-considered policies, faulty selection and training of officials, and inadequate attention to their well-being;
- Elaboration of committees, leading to departmentalism and procrastination; and
- Excessive government control, reducing local autonomy, nourishing mediocrity, and stifling initiative.

Of remedies, Mr. Dodd cites one as of paramount importance—the education of the electorate. An educated electorate would choose—and provide—competent councillors, and these in turn would secure the services of capable officers, with whom they could work in efficient partnership.

citizen from the cradle—and before it—to the grave. To narrow the matter still further, do they do what they have the powers to do, competently?

The structure of local government is so well-known to readers of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, that it is unnecessary to set it forth. Neither do I intend to examine separate functions of local authorities and suggest how they might be improved; to do so properly is far beyond the scope of a short article. I therefore propose to consider local authorities generally in their make-up of elected representatives and paid officers, and their relationship with the central government, but before I do this I want to mention one or two things which I believe to be fundamental.

Perhaps the most prevalent criticism of local authorities runs something like this: "The council cannot compare with business"; "In the business world it would be impossible to get things done if there had to be so much talk before anything was done"; "If I ran my

business the way the council run theirs, I should be bankrupt in a month." But councils do run businesses that are comparable with commerce and industry: trading undertakings are run by limited companies as well as by councils. Incidentally, politics have in many instances had nothing to do with this development of municipal socialism, for many of the most advanced councils in this direction have been preponderantly Tory. In this branch of a council's activities where comparisons can be truly made, it cannot be proved as a matter of evidence and fact that one system is as a general rule more efficient than the other.

Is the Machine Adequate?

It has been said that neither municipal enterprise nor private enterprise is necessarily more efficient than the rival system. It depends on management. A competent manager supported by a committee of competent business men may be expected to make a success of his undertaking, whether those business men are called a committee of a local authority or a board of directors of a company. This statement few would deny, but, like many truisms, it is apt to be disregarded and its implications not fully realised. It follows I think as a logical consequence that local authorities will be efficient if, there are efficient managers or officials, and councillors who are competent. But having said that we have not, as it might be thought, disposed of the matter. It is not quite so simple as that, for no amount of competency in councillors and officials will be productive of the best if the system itself is fundamentally bad. First-class materials and skilled craftsmanship allied to poor design will never produce the most efficient machine. Is then, the design or system of local government the best compromise, for compromise it must be? What alternatives to local self-government are there? Do we want permanent paid commissioners instead of councils? Is control to be vested almost entirely in the Prussian burgomaster? Would the city manager with autocratic control be more efficient? Shall we hand the governance to the experts and increase the measure of bureaucratic power?

Other systems do produce speedier, though not necessarily happier, results, with perhaps less labour of mind and vexation of spirit of those in control, but not always of those controlled. They are efficient with a machine-like efficiency, but like machines, are inflexible; built to do one job to perfection, they will continue in the same cycle of operations indefinitely. Let us, therefore, admit that certain non-democratic methods of government do produce results; but however much we may admire them for their efficiency—and if honest with ourselves, we must do that—we have surely seen that they are not for us, for they are neither government by the people nor for the people. It is significant that in the two English-speaking democracies an indictment of an individual for crime is, on the one side of the Atlantic,

"The People v. . . .", and on the other, "Rex v. . . .", the King representing his subjects everywhere, but not, be it noted, the State.

Wherein lies the essence of such efficiency as appears to exist in these non-democratic systems? At least, in this: that decisions are taken with greater speed, and once taken, executed speedily, whilst procrastination is the handmaiden of many committees. One of the worst features of local government is the multiplicity of committees. There is a definition of a committee to the effect that it is a collection of persons who individually will do nothing, but who collectively will decide that nothing can be done! Whatever truth there may be in this, there is a regrettable tendency to evade issues by appointing committees and sub-committees. A co-ordinate tendency is excessive departmentalism. The local government officer in his time no longer plays many parts. Sections of departments become departments on their own. A one-man job seldom remains so. A sub-committee becomes a standing committee. Efficiency may be the catchword, but ambition is the driving force. A new department is the inevitable offspring of an ambitious official and a self-important chairman. So long as there are numerous committees and numerous departments, so long will there be excessive departmentalism. Too many committees and too many departments tend to create a series of independent and watertight authorities on their own and thus destroy the value of the local authority as a unit. Excessive departmentalism is the negation of unity. If anyone doubts the evil of excessive departmentalism, let him be the pawn in "passing the buck," or ask a sufferer in the early blitzes in almost every one of our big towns and cities.

Public Apathy and Incompetent Councils

Are all these faults intrinsic to the system, or are they the perversion of it? I do not believe the system is perfect, but the inefficiency is only in a small degree due to the defects of the system, and largely due to the shortcomings of the individuals who operate the system. I would go further, and paraphrasing I think it was Professor Laski, say that without councillors of vision and insight who realise that a contented and efficient staff is half the art of local administration, there can be no efficiency. Whilst a competent council is more likely to build up a competent staff, no amount of ability in a staff can inculcate wisdom in the controlling body, nor will conscientious and able officials remain in the service of an incompetent council. It seems, therefore, to me that the question, "Is the local authority efficient," can be answered only by answering two other questions, the first and most important of which is, "Are the elected representatives men of vision and insight?", and the second, "Are the local government officers competent, capable, and disinterested?"

It has been said that if electors choose incompetent or uneducated persons to govern them, that is their own affair. What is more probably true is that the apathy of electors too often results in the election of such persons, to the detriment not only of the electors, but of all in the area of the authority, and many outside that area. One of the primary causes of this apathy, and certainly one of the most potent reasons for a lack of understanding of the local government machine, if not actually of its inefficiency, is the complexity of its structure. No one but the expert, and sometimes not always he, can decide where the functions of one authority cease and another begins. There are parish councils, rural district councils, urban district councils, borough councils, county borough councils, and county councils. No two councils have the same powers, and to the man in the street not only the framework but the actual functioning must be quite unintelligible. Simplification to

possibly one single type of authority with much the same powers is long overdue. But there is another side to it. Paradoxically, the enormous strides of science in this century in the creation and perfection of time and labour-saving devices has resulted in there being less time to devote to the art of government than when the tempo of public business and private life was so much slower. The inevitable result of apathy in the polling booth and the speed of modern life is the negation of careful deliberation and the construction of farsighted policy in the council chamber.

Many of the most competent citizens are to-day declining to enter local government because of the time-wasting procedure of so many councils and committees. Few officials



there are who could not quote instance after instance of tedious and lengthy and sometimes acrimonious debate upon matters of little importance to the community and all too often involving no vital points of principle. On this matter of debate, the criticism that there is too much cackle cannot be denied. It is not denied by council members themselves, who from time to time require the clerk to revise the standing orders in an attempt to curb the exuberance of their own verbosity. Vain and futile hope! The tone is lowered and those who could make a thoughtful contribution will not. Yet matters of far-reaching importance involving great sums of money pass the council without any debate whatsoever.

Councillors' Real Function

Councils and committees do not sufficiently settle policy, their primary function, and leave the officials to carry out such policy. If a fraction of the time spent on matters of detail administration, which are properly the province of the official, were devoted to the selection, training, and well-being of officials; if the officials could and would take decisions on all matters not being policy, so that agendas might be cut and the time saved devoted to the construction of policy, then much of the present unquestionable inefficiency would disappear. Is this too much to hope for? If it is not achieved, local authorities as we know them are doomed.

The British civil service owes much of its eminence during the past hundred years to the fact that it has attracted into its ranks a relatively large proportion of the best brains of each generation. The service in the common weal given by those men and women whose fame is anonymity is unmeasurable and is not weighed by them in the balance against

salary. It is also true that those elected representatives who have left enduring marks and monuments in local government have been those following this same ideal of public service. For a variety of reasons, the twenty years following 1918 saw a partial subversion of this ideal, and a deterioration in the character and personality of the elected members of local authorities. The present struggle has shown that these deep-rooted qualities have not disappeared but have been temporarily overlaid. The enormous amount of voluntary service thrown up in these latter days needs only to be diverted to local government in the post-war years for there to be such a renaissance in local government as would sweep many of our troubles into the limbo of the forgotten past.

What of the officers? The local authority, if it is to function efficiently, must be a partnership. There must exist between the councillors and the officials mutual goodwill, trust, and respect. The vast bulk of local government work is decided in committee, where the officer must have a voice in the deliberations of the committee. He must be skilled but not superior; he must guide but not domineer; he must advise but not dictate. Equally, the committee member, and particularly the chairman, must follow the example of the late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, of whom it has been said that he secured the officials' eager co-operation from the outset by the zeal he brought to the understanding of the official point of view; the emphasis with which he protected them against attack; the encouragement he gave them for good work done. There is nothing which affects the efficiency of a local government officer more than unfair attack or consistent snubbing. NALGO has fought for the recognition of the local government officer, and only so long as NALGO cherishes its object, namely, "To do all such things as may from time to time be considered advisable as safeguard, maintain and improve the status and promote the advancement of local government officers and the service," will it remain a living force in local government.

Key to Staff Efficiency

Can it be said that councils have employed competent and efficient officers, and have been at pains to ensure that such officers are contented? There runs through all articles upon local government, through all reports of Royal Commissions and government departments, the ever-recurring emphasis on the promotion and maintenance of a satisfactory standard in the service. This standard cannot be too high. Yet how many local authorities have sufficiently realised the importance of recruitment, promotion, and general well-being of their staffs to create a single committee charged with nothing else? I take the following paragraph from Lord Snell's chapter on "The Town Council" as it is so pertinent:

"The total sum spent upon local government is so vast that cheeseparing parsimony in providing the technical advice by which municipal councillors are guided is one of the most extravagant forms of economy. A municipality is always badly served by an overworked, underpaid, and discontented staff; and it is mere prudence to ensure that the rates of remuneration, the prospects of promotion, and the provision for superannuation of the officers should be generous enough to attract and satisfy men of undeniable competence and character."

Is that precept practised? How many councils have observed the recommendation of the Ministry of Health that the salaries of officials should not be bandied about in public debate, and of how many councillors can it be said that they know and have tried to implement the recommendations of the Hadow Report? Until these things happen, it is inconceivable that local authorities will be free from the criticism of being inefficient.

There are few professions in which continuous study is required throughout a whole tenure of office to such a degree as is required of the local government officer if he is to be efficient. There are few professions where this amount of study is so ill-rewarded and to which so little encouragement is given. How many officials recognise this need for continuous study?—study not only of those matters directly affecting their particular job, but also of the whole system of local government in which is inextricably mingled the art of living. And how many, recognising the need, undertake this study?

Security of tenure is one of the greatest attractions of the local government service; in certain circumstances it is essential, but there is an aspect of security that encourages inefficiency and poor service.

"I don't think my boy is smart enough to do well in business; he had better go into the council offices where he will have a safe job!"

Security of tenure must be given to the officer who is called upon to advise contrary to the private interests of the members of his council. But there is a wide margin between the security necessary that advice shall be disinterested and fearless, and the security that continues in office plodding, unimaginative, uncreative officers, following without initiative the routine which existed when they took office, until the day they draw their superannuation! Such are not unknown; let us hope they are an expiring phenomenon! The youth of today is thinking out his own salvation in a world whose creeds, dogmas, and doctrines have set the four quarters of the earth aflame.

Certain of the inefficiencies—and efficiency too—are directly attributable to the control of the central government. Before the war, there flowed into Whitehall from every council in the land a welter of ideas and proposals, some good, some bad, and many indifferent. Whitehall was an unrivalled sorting house, and in its way—slow though the machinery was—it took unto itself the best that was produced in local government and made of it a model for the rest of the country. For the more backward authorities this was a blessing, but upon those councils who had years before laid the foundations of the model, it acted as a dead hand. The system nourished mediocrity and stifled initiative. For the most part, the central government in its relation to local authorities before the war was not of itself creative: the initiative was in the more advanced local authorities. In regional administration there has been an endeavour to combine the operative and the audit. In war, the audit is too slow and can be an intolerable nuisance; and operatives must be the experienced officers on the spot. If regional government is to succeed, it must be constituted on the principle that Whitehall, under the direction of Parliament, will settle broad national policy and give to the regional officers wide executive powers to ensure the carrying out of such policy as may be most advantageous in the local conditions. As things are, there appears great waste of time, energy, and man-power, in that Region and Whitehall both have to function on far too many matters. Indeed, wider executive powers are given by most councils to their officers than Whitehall delegates to Region. Yet in the nature of things these regional officers have to exercise the power that is derived from the purse over the

local council. Reference to authority that is no authority is productive of no immediate result unless it be intense irritation.

Attention has been called time and time again to the fact that vital and adequate information has not been furnished to local authorities, and particularly is this true in relation to the heavier raids and the conditions arising therefrom. How far this is due to regional administration and how far it is due to lack of appreciation by the departments concerned of the necessity of a strong Intelligence Section to each Ministry, collating and imparting information speedily, I am not in a position to judge. Unquestionably it must take longer for information to be transmitted

directions. The three ways to which I refer are:

1. The direct transfer to the central authority of functions which formerly were those of the local authority, e.g. unemployment assistance, veterinary inspection, and trunk roads.
2. Increased government grants have brought inevitably in their wake increased centralised control. This is too well-known to require further comment. How much could be written!
3. Utilising the machinery of local government for the undertaking, at government cost, of functions of the central government. A typical example is the operation of the government evacuation scheme. In some directions, councils and sometimes officials are made as it were agents of the government.

Make no mistake. A.F.S. to N.F.S. was more than the changing of a letter. The increasing dominance of Whitehall is not the product only of the war. The cry, "It's up to the Government," or, "This matter must be dealt with nationally," was heard before the war. The war has merely given impetus to this policy. A small stone rolling silently down a snow slope becomes a huge snowball, and if it is not broken may create the engulfing avalanche. The power of the central government over the local authority is increased by war. It affects the efficiency of local government—it may yet engulf it. If it does, gone will be one of the main pillars of democracy. The voice of the people can be heard in West-

minster; it can even find rare entrance to Whitehall, but it is heard daily in the council chamber, in the committee room, and in the council offices. The pity is that it is not vocal sufficiently on those things that matter, and I doubt if it will be until citizenship is given its rightful place in the educational curriculum.

I wrote that I cannot provide a ready-made solution to the inefficiencies of local government (I was not referring to ephemeral and trivial defects) and I would conclude upon the same note. I do not believe there is one solution, and in this regard anything ready-made savours of revolution and not evolution. Changes there must be. Let them be by ordered progress. Whatever else may arise from Reconstruction Committees or Royal Commissions, whether areas are altered, local authorities reconstituted on a simpler and more uniform pattern, or functions transferred to *ad hoc* authorities or to the central government, one thing is, I believe, fundamental to the continuance of truly democratic government locally and nationally—an educated electorate. An electorate which by the force of war has realised the futilities of many of the pre-war standards of values, must become an educated electorate, well versed in citizenship and determined that its representatives in the council chamber shall be those men of wisdom and integrity who can truly lay claim to that old and honourable title of City Father. Such councillors would secure the services of competent officers, of that there can be no real doubt, and together this partnership would ensure that the proper functions of the local authority remained subject to the direct influence of the electorate locally and that these same proper functions were discharged efficiently.

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from the authority to Region, from Region to Whitehall, Whitehall to Region, and thence to local authorities, sifted and analysed no doubt at each stage.

Regional government has been of advantage in that it has brought the civil servant face to face with the practical difficulties of the local authorities and officers. It has replaced paper contacts with personal interviews. But there has been a regrettable tendency for the regional officer to interfere in the province of the local officer. This is properly resented by the local government officer, who not infrequently has greater knowledge and experience in the particular work. Particularly is this so when the regional officer is not the experienced civil servant.

The never-ending flood of circulars is increased by regional administration to a point where the hard-pressed local government officer is finding it almost impossible to keep abreast of the tide. These circulars are certainly not as concise and as lucid as they could be made to be; indeed, some of the circulars might very well have the warning, "This circular must not be taken to mean what it says until the contrary is proved!"

Much of the above may have been due largely to "growing pains" and to the exceptional war-time conditions, but in three ways is the central government reducing local autonomy. Whether this renders local authorities less efficient is a matter of opinion. What it certainly does is to remove from the sphere of local influence and local self-government matters of considerable importance to the local community. Councils are by no means blameless, for they have permitted, and indeed encouraged, this state of affairs in many

DO WE WANT a MUNICIPAL INCOME-TAX?

The article by Lady Simon in the December "Local Government Service" advocating the substitution of the present rating system by a municipal income tax has aroused much interest. Below we print a selection of the contributions received.

WHY SCRAP LABOUR OF 340 YEARS?

From D. M. LEECH, P.A.S.I., A.A.I., Chief Valuation Officer, Grimsby.

A SUBSTITUTE for our present rating system has again been discussed, in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE and in the Journal of the Institute of Public Administration. Both articles were by economists with whom one hesitates to cross swords, but I feel, nevertheless, that a riposte is due from someone humble enough to be in daily contact with rating and valuation matters.

The leading article in the December LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE says that Lady Simon addressed a conference of "municipal treasurers" on a substitute for rates. If so, she was preaching to the converted, for what could be better for the treasurers, some of whom still think they are valuers! Actually, on April 22, 1938, Lady Simon addressed a conference of rating and valuation officers, and I disagree that "the conference was much impressed by her arguments."

Reference is also made to the article by Professor and Mrs. Hicks, in the "Public Administration Journal," that valuation could be transferred from rents to selling prices. Surely this would afford just as many technical difficulties as are alleged to exist in the present system. Leasehold selling prices vary according to the number of years unexpired, but they would presumably have to be ignored or adjusted to a freehold value comparative to the actual value for a number of years certain. Also, one would still find apparently identical houses selling at different prices and it would then be necessary to determine the selling price which might reasonably be expected to be received by a "hypothetical vendor." Again, there can be no doubt that rating based on selling prices would encourage "jerry building," for the cheaper the house the lower the rates. There would also be difficulty in assessing properties which are never sold, such as council houses and municipal offices, and the same problems would be encountered with undertakings, etc. Assessment of licensed premises would be awkward, too.

Not Complicated

Turning to Lady Simon's article, I am going to be rude and say that a first-hand knowledge of rating is gained only by daily practical contact. Economically, the present system might not be perfect, but, economically, what is? To the trained rating officer or rating valuer, the basis of annual value is not complicated and not impossible of explanation to the ratepayer, but it certainly takes a long time to explain to that ratepayer why we have not adhered to the basis of annual value under the 1925 Act.

Lady Simon says that the incidence of rating is unfair, presumably because the larger the family the more the rates. But, surely, the larger the family the more benefit is derived from police protection, education, housing, and public health services. Rating is compared with income tax, and it is suggested that if there are no profits there would be no payment of rates, as in the case of income tax. Notwithstanding the fact that a rateable occupier makes no profit, however, he still derives benefit from the rates.

"Imaginative contortions and mental gymnastics" are Lady Simon's description of the efforts to determine rental value of hereditaments valued on the receipts basis. Is this accountancy any different from assessment to Schedule A and is its principle any different from the proposed municipal income tax

mentioned later in the article? Is it any less certain? I think not.

Lady Simon asks: "Is it worse to tax bread than to tax house room?" That is a question of social politics and has nothing to do with the merits or de-merits of the rating system. But, since she suggests an alternative for rating, Lady Simon apparently believes that it is not worse to tax bread than to tax house room.

Later, she says that, "by keeping rates on the rental basis, we have abandoned the original idea that they should be raised according to ability to pay." But there must be a measure of ability to pay and that measure has been prescribed by law as rental value, which itself depends upon supply and demand. Under the present rating system, it must be decided whether it was the intention of the subsidising legislation after the last war that the artificial ratio between supply and demand for rented houses was to be ignored, whether it contemplated some form of differential treatment, or whether it contemplated at all! If differential treatment is given where the demand exceeds the supply, then a similar adjustment must logically be made where the supply exceeds the demand. If the "scarcity" of rents is to be discounted, then the "surplusage" of rents should equally be discounted.

Hardships Exaggerated?

Lady Simon suggests that dwelling houses are not correctly assessed because it was thought before this war that correct assessment would bear too hardly on people of small means. With the present level of income tax, one wonders what hardship could possibly have been caused before the war by an increase in rateable values of post-1918 houses. It might have meant a smaller h.p. car for post-1918 occupiers; the pre-1918 would have been able to take buses instead of walking!

Another of Lady Simon's complaints is that reductions in the amount of rates made as a result of war damage seem to vary from authority to authority. What has this to do with the principles of an Act passed 14 years before? In such an emergency as this, what Act of Parliament is sufficient to meet the abnormal conditions? The fault lies with the present-day administration and not with the 1925 Act.

She suggests further that income should be made the basis of rating, and that, in order not to put too heavy a burden on the ratepayer, more local services should be taken over by the government. What would be the ultimate difference? This can be answered at the end of the next paragraph.

Next we come to the postponement of the 1939 revaluation and the statement that the house as the basis of rating is fundamentally unsound. Is not this Lady Simon's sole reason for abolishing the rating system, that use of the house as a basis of rating involves hardship upon the householder? She suggests as an alternative that contribution to public expenditure should be according to means, the means being measured by the assessment to the national income tax. Thus, the more profits a man made, the more would he pay for the protection of the property, the education and clinical treatment of his children, the clearing of the refuse, and so forth, of the man making less profits. If one man made no profits he would get all these

services for nothing—in fact at somebody else's expense. What scope there would be for "imaginative contortions and mental gymnastics" to prove no profits! The result of all this is obviously that the more profits made by the rich, the more burdens they would take from the poor. I suggest that this is the real reason for the suggested change to municipal income tax, and not the faults of the rating system?

In support of her proposed reform, Lady Simon mentions the systems of other countries where it works. Apparently, however, a real estate tax has to be levied there, which might seem to ensure that, in the absence of profits, a man would still contribute something. This tax is based on an estimate of rent taken at 5 per cent of the capital value. The difficulties of ascertaining selling price, mentioned earlier, would also apply to capital value, but what is truly remarkable is that an estimate of rent has to be made! It seems, then, that an estimate of rent is all right for municipal income tax when based on capital value, but no good for rating when based (supposedly) on actual rents!

Again, for the purpose of taxing concerns having branches in several towns, it would appear necessary to resort to the "imaginative contortions and mental gymnastics" at present used for rating public utilities, etc. Next, Lady Simon suggests a real estate tax based on present rateable values. One is beginning to think that the old system isn't so useless after all. In fact, Lady Simon herself seems by now to have lost a little faith in her municipal income tax, for she says that 50 per cent of local expenditure might still be charged on rateable value as at present, so that we might not have a revolutionary change-over.

Towards the end of her paper, she anticipates that there would be extra payments if an income-tax system were adopted. Why not, then, leave the rating system alone and have an extra payment of rates on post-1918 houses only? If there have to be extra payments, they are no worse under rating principles than under an income-tax basis, unless—and this is a matter of opinion—it is desirable to pass them on to one section of the community.

Improving the System

So far, I have confined myself to destructive criticism of Lady Simon's proposals. In an effort to be constructive—and thereby admitting that, in my opinion, the present rating system can be improved—I put forward the following suggestions for its amendment which would, I think, lessen the clamour for more radical reform.

Absolute uniformity of assessment is essential for the purpose of government grants and the county rate. The present lack of uniformity and the apparent inability to obtain it create difficulties the solution of which would materially improve the position. But complete uniformity on a national basis is virtually unobtainable, and even on a county basis it is so elusive that it has not been completely secured. It requires that every ratepayer shall be satisfied—an impossible task.

I suggest, therefore, that uniformity be confined within the limits of the area of each individual council, rural, urban, or county borough. In this way, local councils could pursue their own policies, and if one chose correct assessments and low poundages and another low assessments and high poundages, the ratepayer would be unaffected, since he is concerned only with the amount he has to

pay and how that amount compares with the rates paid by his fellow townfolk.

Were uniformity between areas to be ignored, the work of county valuation departments would, for rating purposes, be confined to inter-parochial undertakings and special properties. Another system would have to be found on which to base block grants and county precepts.

The basis of calculation of block grants would have to be changed from rateable value per head to rates paid per head. Since the amount of his demand note is what matters most to the ratepayer, and since this largely depends upon local spending policy and local needs, the level of rates per head is more truly indicative of the burden he has to bear. In addition, heavy expenditure on such items as public assistance are not reflected in a figure of rateable value per head.

The substitution of the rates-per-head basis would involve an adjustment in the method of calculating the rates factor with which to weight the population. I suggest that a reasonable rate poundage is 10s. in the £, which would give an index figure of £5 for rates, comparable with the rateable value index of £10. The method of the existing formula, whereby the lower the rateable value the more the grant, should be reversed, with the result that the higher the rates paid per head the higher would be the amount of the grant. This would not be in the interests of national economy, however, and it would be necessary to limit the basis of rates per head in the calculation to the amounts paid for essential services. This would eliminate grants on rates paid to satisfy any excessive zeal and civic pride of the local electorate.

An immediately apparent advantage is that the higher the expenditure, on public assistance or civil defence, for instance, the greater would be the grant. Expenditure on essential services could be controlled by the Government fixing a maximum amount per head that could be spent without Government authority. Another advantage of the method is that two towns having the same population and the same expenditure would have their population weighted to the same extent, and a lowly-assessed town would not benefit at the expense of a correctly-assessed town.

The fact that the present system of grants came into existence after the 1925 Act and thereby aggravated lack of uniformity does not mean that the principles of rating are wrong.

(Continued in next column)

TIME RIPE FOR INVESTIGATION

From Alderman G. MONTAGU HARRIS, President of the International Union of Local Authorities

LADY SIMON'S article on a municipal income tax is of great interest and importance. Few will deny that our rating system needs reform, and the question of a local income tax has never been sufficiently studied in this country. The County Councils Association went into the subject some years ago at the instigation of Lord St. Aldwyn, but turned it down mainly on the ground of difficulty of administration. I have been told that the Association of Municipal Corporations recently appointed a committee to inquire into the matter, but I do not know whether it is functioning or likely to report.

There is one aspect of the matter which Lady Simon does not touch upon, namely, the effect of a local income tax on grants-in-aid. One of the main objections to the rate is that it is not based on ability to pay, whereas the income tax is. This unfairness to ratepayers is to some extent balanced by the grant-in-aid from exchequer funds, which are very largely fed from the income tax. If local authorities were permitted to levy an income tax, could they expect to receive grants-in-aid as at present?

Lady Simon points out that there is a

'INCONSISTENT and UNDEMOCRATIC' 27

From T. E. PARKER, A.L.A.A., F.V.A., Chief Valuation Officer and Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Wigston U.D.C.

ON reading Lady Simon's article I was so impressed at the lack of consistency in her case for a municipal income tax that I was not surprised to read the confession which opens its concluding sentence: "I am in no sense an expert."

Her reference to extricating "the 'hypothetical tenant' from the recesses of the jungle" is unfortunate, for, so far as I am aware, he has never been in the "jungle." The rent which a "hypothetical tenant" would be prepared to pay for any given premises is arrived at by using as a basis a predetermined measure of value per unit of area. With dwelling-houses, for example, the average rent of similar houses in a particular locality, divided by the superficial area, gives a rate per square foot which can be used as a basis for assessing any particular house. This acts as a general guide, but the individual circumstances affecting the letting value of each property are also taken into account. Common sense and a reasonable interpretation of the rating and valuation

(Continued from preceding column)

but rather that the system of calculating grants is wrong.

It would also be necessary to adopt a new system for the purposes of the county rate precept. One method would be to apportion the levy on the basis of weighted population as ascertained for grant purposes. Another might be to levy the county rate on the rates-per-head basis. In either case, the rate burden would be distributed more evenly and more individually than at present.

The present machinery of rating is not unworkable, but it has suffered, and is suffering, from the unskilled hands of men who are not rating valuers nor even valuers, while in a large number of areas the valuation organisation established is hopelessly inadequate and unqualified for the importance of the work.

I greatly doubt that any practicable alternative structure can be found, and I believe that it would be safer to rebuild on the old, firm foundations, reinforced as they have been from time to time by decisions of the Courts. A new system would mean more legal decisions, more case law, more uncertainty, all of which we might well be spared. Besides, why sacrifice the labour of 340 years?

municipal income tax in both Sweden and Denmark. She does not mention that it used to be common also in Germany and Holland, but that it was abolished in those countries because of the effect it had, or seemed likely to have, on the national exchequer. What effect would it have here?

If it were to be decided to have a municipal income tax, I do not understand why Lady Simon should wish it to be collected by the local authority. If both national and municipal income taxes are to be levied, it is an unnecessary expense to have two sets of collectors. The local tax can be collected together with the national tax, as under the system of "additional centimes" which exists in most Continental countries, the local portion being, of course, paid over to the local authority to which it is due.

There is so much in Lady Simon's article with which I agree that I cannot touch on all the points, but I cordially support her suggestion that "the time has come when the question of a municipal income tax should be seriously considered and investigated by an expert committee."

acts have to be exercised by every rating and valuation officer; in fact, the 1925 Act demands these qualities of him, since the definitions of both gross value and net annual value contain the phrase: "The rent at which the hereditament might reasonably be expected to let from year to year . . ."

Rates represent a contribution to the local exchequer for services rendered for the benefit of the local community. The benefits from local sanitary and lighting arrangements, provision of parks, and improvement of local roads and footpaths, can be more easily traced to a limited number of individuals than can the benefits from national expenditure. Although the system may result in some apparent inequalities, they are to a large extent removed by the system of grants-in-aid from the central government.

Any other method of raising the sum required to pay local expenses can be obtained only at the expense of the national exchequer. A change to a municipal income tax means a new tax which immediately offends the rule that "every new tax is a bad tax, but an old tax is no tax." The community cannot immediately adapt itself to a new tax, and in the adjustment much inconvenience and inequity may be caused. On the other hand, rates are well known and are well provided for by both business men and private individuals.

The argument in the second paragraph of Lady Simon's article, that the system "is wasteful in the extreme" simply because certain questions are sometimes settled in the courts is not a good one. Surely, if her suggested municipal income tax were in operation, some right of appeal to the courts would have to be allowed to any party aggrieved; otherwise the administrator of such a tax would be a dictator.

The suggestion that rating "offends against the first canon of taxation, namely that its basis should be certain," is equally false. In my view, the payment of rates on rateable value is the most certain tax we have in this country. Moreover, it is generally understood and in many municipalities an attempt has been made, as far as the law will allow, to stabilise the rate over a period of years, thus enabling commercial houses to budget ahead with accuracy and obvious advantage.

In paragraph 3, Lady Simon states: "Ability to pay has long been the accepted maxim of our national taxation, or at least of direct taxation." This maxim quoted in support of the municipal income tax would appear to be more imaginary than real, for more cases go to the courts in dispute of income tax liability than in respect of liability for rates. There are also many anomalies where the theory of "ability to pay" fails to work, for example where people deliberately seek to avoid payment of tax. Here may I quote from a report in the December issue of the "Certified Accountants' Journal" of the recent case of Wild v. King Smith. In this case Mr. Justice Macnaghten decided in favour of the income-tax payer, saying:

"As Lord Tomlin said in the case of Duke of Westminster v. Commissioners of Inland Revenue: 'Every man is entitled if he can to order his affairs so that the tax attaching under the appropriate acts is less than it otherwise would be.' It is equally true to say that every man is entitled, if he can, to order his affairs so that his property is not liable to be taxed, and that is all that Mr. King Smith did."

When referring to national taxes, Lady Simon makes no reference to indirect taxes, the incidence of which is mainly on the persons who spend their money on unnecessary luxuries, eventually having no "ability to pay" for anything else.

Whatever may be the merits or demerits

of the derating acts, the result would appear to be that less is paid in local rates from the derated premises, whilst the national exchequer reaps an increased contribution through the consequent rise in profits. It is interesting to note that the original object of derating industrial premises was to check the tendency of manufacturers to move to lower rated localities. The saving accruing to railway companies through derating was intended to be devoted wholly to the reduction of freight charges on certain classes of goods. Such a composite system of rating and taxation as exists in this country confers the maximum benefits both on the individual and on the State.

If, as Lady Simon suggests, certain services were taken over by the central government, one can visualise a heavy increase in expenditure. Those intimately connected with local government have seen many instances of this result of state ownership. The argument put forward for control by the central government is always that it makes for efficiency; mention is rarely made of the increase in expenditure and the corresponding increase in taxation. If such transfers of control are really as successful as they are claimed to be, why not nationalise everything, banks, businesses, farms, all kinds of real property, etc., and pay every citizen remuneration according to his or her ability, with the minimum not less than would ensure a certain predetermined standard of living? All profits would then accrue to the state, and taxes (if any) would not only be at a minimum, but could be framed so as to conform to all the "canons."

Lady Simon's proposals seem to sound the death knell of the democratic system. Her statement on page 272, paragraph 2: "Everybody—above a certain income—should contribute to public expenditure according to his means" is followed in the next column by: "The Royal Commission on Local Taxation turned it down, chiefly on the ground that you could not decide where income was earned. The Kempe Report, 1914 . . . decided against the proposal on the ground of administrative difficulties." To justify her proposal she states that it "was formerly in operation in Germany"—an argument which is not likely to carry much weight either now or for many years hence. We are fighting to the death for our democratic principles, and local government will remain, otherwise we shall have fought and sacrificed in vain. Local authorities do not want increased grants-in-aid from the central government. What they do want is more autonomy. They can manage their own affairs and cut their cloth according to their purse. Rating authorities have power to relieve ratepayers of their liability in cases of poverty and this power has recently been extended by the Ministry of Health to cover hardship.

In the examples of how a local income tax works in Stockholm, it is noted that even there a hypothetical rent is reckoned as 5 per cent of the capital value of a house, so the system seems to be a kind of combination of a local income tax and a valuation of property; actually a considerably more complicated system than that in this country. Again, the assessment on banks and business premises and the ultimate apportionment is, quoting Lady Simon, "a calculation which is admittedly not an easy one to make," and "would seem to be similar to the problems tackled by the Anglo-Scottish Railway Assessment Board and those arising in connection with rating public utility undertakings in this country."

Under the heading, "Adaptation to Britain," Lady Simon states: "The real estate tax, which would be equivalent to our present rate, might be assessed as at present on the rateable value." She continues: "It

(Continued at foot of next column)

MANY MEMBERS IN NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST

READERS will, we are confident, join with us in congratulating the many members of NALGO whose names appeared in the King's New Year Honours List. Most of the awards, as was to be expected, were made in recognition of services to civil defence and, in common with the remainder, amount to a recognition of the work of the local government service as a whole as well as of the individual officers honoured.

Of special interest to NALGO are the names of Dr. J. F. Davidson, County Medical Officer for Somerset, a member of the National Executive Council and president of the Somerset county branch, who receives the O.B.E. for his work in connection with the organisation of the Emergency Medical Service and the health side of the evacuation scheme, and Mr. J. D. Imrie, City Chamberlain, Edinburgh, a member of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee, who is made a C.B.E.

Other NALGO names in the list include:

C.B.E.

D. H. Brown, County Surveyor and Bridge-master, Warwickshire, C.C.

E. J. B. King, Officer-in-Charge, L.C.C. Rest Centre Service and Institutions.

J. K. Swales, General Manager and Engineer, Sheffield Corporation Waterworks; formerly at Bolton, where he was one of the most popular presidents the branch has had.

O.B.E.

J. Kennedy Allerton, lately Town Clerk, Worthing; for many years president, Worthing branch.

T. R. Ferris, Technical and Administrative Officer, Dorset War Agricultural Executive Committee.

A. W. Forsdike, Town Clerk and A.R.P. Controller, Kingston-upon-Thames.

D. T. Griffiths, Town Clerk and A.R.P. Controller, Southwark.

G. S. McIntire, Town Clerk and A.R.P. Controller, Sunderland; honorary secretary of local Savings Committee and past chairman and president of Sunderland branch.

G. W. Molyneux, Public Assistance Officer, Liverpool; vice-president, Liverpool branch.

T. Oldroyd, Town Clerk and A.R.P. sub-controller, Nuneaton.

J. Parkin, City Engineer and Chief of Rescue Services, Portsmouth; vice-president, Portsmouth branch.

N. J. Pugh, Water Engineer and Manager, Coventry, and Colonel and Zone Commander, Coventry Home Guard.

E. W. Tame, Town Clerk and A.R.P. Controller, Birkenhead; past president, Birkenhead branch.

Herbert James Worwood, Town Clerk, Southend-on-Sea; past president, Southend branch.

(Continued from preceding column)

is open to question whether a sufficiently stable source of local income would be provided without a real estate tax."

The municipal income tax as propounded by Lady Simon ignores the principle of payment for services rendered. Social power in this country has always been accompanied by a high standard of living, including a substantial residence, but to adopt a local income tax might mean that a poor man with a large family would move into a big, well-appointed house, paying no tax, whereas a local magnate would be so reduced by taxation as to be compelled to live in a cottage.

Finally, no prudent business executive would be guided by anyone who, to use her own words, is "in no sense an expert," on any question on a par with the present subject. What is essential is the instruction of the people in the machinery and cost of their own local government

M.B.E.

S. G. Abbott, Chief Veterinary Officer, Glasgow.
J. R. Ashby, Chief Warden, Consett U.D.C.
R. Bennett, Chairman, Colwyn Bay Area Savings Committee; past president, Colwyn Bay branch; member, North-Western and North Wales district committee, North Wales provincial Whitley Council, and National Whitley Council.

Miss A. Burgess, lately Matron, Crumpsall Hospital, Manchester.

Miss J. McK. Calder, secretary, local Emergency Committee for Nursing, Manchester.

E. L. P. Carter, lately Chief Officer, Long Eaton fire brigade, now Divisional Officer, N.F.S.; past vice-president of branch.

E. Edwards, Senior Officer to A.R.P. Controller, Hull.

R. T. Griffith, Clerk and Chief Billeting Officer, Gwyrfa R.D.C.; president and chairman, Caernarvon and district branch since its formation.

J. P. Holder, Chief Clerk, Public Health Department, Worcestershire C.C.

G. H. Jones, honorary secretary, Walsall Savings Committee.

T. Kennett, Assistant Town Clerk and Rehousing Manager, St. Marylebone.

C. S. Perkins, Town Clerk and District A.R.P. Controller, Jarrow; past president of branch.

R. W. Ramsay, Master, Leicester City Public Assistance Institution; past chairman and president, Leicester branch.

D. J. Reed, Registrar, Manchester Western Sub-district.

A. Walsh, Assistant County A.R.P. Controller, Staffordshire.

BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL

A. L. Bradley, Registrar, Grimsby Corporation Cemeteries.

J. Simcock, Staff Officer and First Class Instructor, Rescue Services, Plymouth.

KING'S POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES MEDAL

(FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE)

H. Blakey, O.B.E., Divisional Officer, London F.F. (Ealing), for service as Assistant Regional Fire Officer. Mr. Blakey was awarded the O.B.E. for fire prevention service in the last war.

While every effort has been made to make the above list complete and accurate, there may be a number of inadvertent omissions, and we shall be grateful if branch secretaries will inform us of them.

B. and O. Gift from Malta

A SHAMING example to those members of NALGO—not a few, unfortunately—who ignore or neglect the Benevolent and Orphan Fund, was set the other day by Mr. Leslie Bennett, a 21-year-old member of the Mountain Ash branch.

Mr. Bennett has every excuse to forget about the Fund, and indeed about NALGO. For many months past he has been serving, not in reasonable comfort and safety at home, but in what must today be one of the most uncomfortable and perilous spots in the world, apart from the Russian front—Malta. His local authority has refused to supplement his service pay. The only contribution he receives from home—to which he has had no leave since he enlisted in June, 1939—is the periodical gift from his branch's Comforts Fund.

Yet he has not forgotten the claims of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund, and recently asked that his next gift of 10s. 6d. from the Comforts Fund be credited to it.

After that, can any of the rest of us fail in our own duty towards less fortunate colleagues?

NALGO ROLL OF HONOUR

29

THIS month's Roll of Honour contains the names of many members reported killed, missing, or captured a year or more ago, but not reported to Headquarters. We want to keep the record complete, accurate, and up-to-date, and therefore again appeal to branch secretaries to send information promptly. Owing to the length of the list, totals of casualties and awards are held over.

Military

KILLED

Ayling, Sgr. J. V., R.N., taxation dept., Middlesex. Presumed died on active service.
Bibby, Gnr. D. G., clerk's dept., West Ham.
Bryant, Pte. M., Shenley Hospital, Middlesex. Died on active service.
Burridge, 2nd Lt. H. L., finance dept., Middlesex. Killed in action.
Campion, Sgn. P. G., treasurer's dept., Ealing. Died of wounds, Tobruk.
*Chapman, L.-A/C C. F., R.A.F., education dept., West Ham.
*Chipperfield, Sgt. C. T., R.A.F., Folkestone.
Collins, Sgn. R. T., standing joint committee, Middlesex.
Coping, A/C I A. J. T., R.A.F., public assistance dept., Middlesex.
Elliott, L.-A/C W. A., R.A.F., 21, public assistance dept., Kilsyth, Stirling. Died from injuries after flying accident.
Harrold, L.-Cpl. E. T. H., Redhill County Hospital, Middlesex.
Hawkes, Sgt.-Pilot R. J., R.A.F., finance dept., Middlesex. Died on active service.
Hobby, Sgt.-Pilot W. F. G., R.A.F., electricity dept., Gloucester. Died on active service.
Howie, Cpl. A. D., Springfield Hospital, Middlesex. Killed in action.
Juett, Gnr. C. T., R.A., engineer's dept., Middlesex. Killed in air raid.
Kingston, Gnr. E. E., R.A., standing joint committee, Middlesex. Killed in action.
Lawson, 2nd Lt. H. C., R.E., engineer's dept., Middlesex. Died on active service.
Leith, Gnr. F., R.A., Harefield Sanatorium, Middlesex. Died on active service.
Lockwood, Flt.-Sgt. J. C., R.A.F., clerk's dept., Middlesex. Killed in action.
Lovell, Sgt. W. J., R.E., architect's dept., Middlesex. Killed in air raid.
Peachey, L.-Cpl. G. W., Middlesex Colony. Died on active service.
Pike, Cpl. H. R., Springfield Hospital, Middlesex. Killed in action.
Slocome, L.-A/C A. V., R.A.F., finance dept., Middlesex.
Stafford, A/C W., R.A.F., education dept., Ealing. Killed in air raid.
†Taylor, L.-Cpl. D., treasurer's dept., Scarborough. Died of wounds.
Wiggs, Sgt.-Pilot G. W. T., R.A.F., libraries dept., Ilford.

MISSING

Anderson, Sgt.-Pilot G., R.A.F., technical dept., Fife C.C. Missing in Middle East.
Batty, 2nd Lt. C. C., R.A., 37, treasurer's dept., Newcastle-on-Tyne. Presumed drowned.
Butterfield, Sgt. Air-Gnr. T. P., R.A.F., planning assistant, regional planning office, Bolton. Missing, believed killed in air engagement over Mediterranean.
Brayley, Sgt.-Pilot E., R.A.F., clerk's dept., Shrewsbury. Missing from flight over France.
Clayton, Sgr. E. S., education dept., Middlesex.
Crawford, Pte. S. R., R.A.M.C., Central Middlesex County Hospital.
Dobb, Sgt.-Pilot K. H., R.A.F., clerk's dept., Middlesex.
Green, K., R.N., public assistance dept., Lancashire. Missing from H.M.S. Neptune.
Grigg, Rfn. H. A., education dept., Middlesex.
Harding, Sgt. W. Op. (Air Gunner), R.A.F., 20, public assistance dept., Blackpool.
Hemingway, Supply-Rating J., R.N., 24, clerk's dept., North Riding C.C. Missing from H.M.S. Prince of Wales.

Jolly, Sgr. F., R.N., collector's dept., Southend-on-Sea. Missing, presumed killed.
Merrick, Pte. K. W., R.A.M.C., Central Middlesex county hospital.
Newey, Pte. J., Shenley Hospital, Middlesex.
Payne, Marine W. E., R.M., standing joint committee, Middlesex, presumed dead.
Phillips, Sgt. A. G., E.S., R.A.F.V.R., surveyor's dept., Crayford. Believed killed.
Proctor, Coder A. L., R.N., 20, water dept., Burnley. Believed killed in H.M.S. Cossack.
Ranger, Trpr. R. E. J., county libraries dept., Essex C.C. Missing in Middle East.
Reason, Sgt.-Pilot D., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Stafford. Missing after operational flight from Malta.
Robson, L.-A/C W., R.A.F., 21, Registry of Deeds, N. Riding C.C. Presumed prisoner.
Shadbolt, A.B. A. V., R.N., Middlesex C.C. Presumed dead.
Staite, L.-Cpl. E. M., clerk's dept., Cheltenham. Missing in Libya.
Tate, Flying-Officer E. W., D.F.C., junior engineering assistant, Hartlepool. Missing from operations with Coastal Command. (See awards column.)
*Williams, Sgt. Air-Gunner R. Penry, R.A.F., 21, county mental hospital, Bridgend, Glam.

PRISONERS OF WAR

Brewster, Rfn. F. W., K.R.R., finance dept., Middlesex.
Burgess, Pte. H. G., Grenadier Guards, Springfield Hospital, Middlesex.
Cleeve, Sgt.-Obs. A. W., R.A.F.V.R., engineer's dept., Winchester.
Coleman, Sr. F. A., R.E., Napsbury Hospital. Middlesex.
Eidmans, Rfn. G. H., K.R.R., finance dept., Middlesex.
Jarvis, Driver P. J., Armoured Div. Sigs., finance dept., Middlesex.
Johnston, 2nd Lt. K. D., R.A., public assistance dept., Middlesex.
Jones, Pte. D. G., Welsh Guards, Springfield Hospital, Middlesex.
Leather, Sgt.-Pilot G., R.A.F.V.R., A.R.P. dept., Essex C.C. Prisoner in Italy.
Maplesden, Sgr. K. E., Middlesex Yeomanry, public health dept., Ealing.
Newcombe, Gnr. J., R.A., engineer's dept., Middlesex.
Matthews, Major C. B., R.A.M.C., public health dept., Middlesex.
Puddy, Pte. A. L., The Buffs, standing joint committee, Middlesex.
Sparey, Bandsman F., D.L.I., Redhill county hospital, Middlesex.
Sutton, L.-Cpl. R. V., R.A.M.C., Central Middlesex County Hospital.
Sutton, Guardsman T., Coldstream Guards, Middlesex Colony.
Taylor, Pte. W. S., R.A.M.C., Central Middlesex county hospital.
Wareing, Sgr. A., R.A., treasurer's dept., Blackpool. Prisoner in Italy.
* Previously reported missing.
† Previously reported wounded.

Civilian

KILLED

Churchill, V. L., finance dept., Middlesex. Killed in air raid.
Oliver, F. H., education dept., Middlesex. Killed in air raid.

AWARDS TO MEMBERS

Military

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
Flying-Officer I. D. Oliver, R.A.F.V.R., treasurer's dept., Aylesbury—has made 32 operational flights and on one occasion brought back his machine from the Baltic on one engine.
Flying-Officer E. W. Tate, R.A.F., junior engineering assistant, Hartlepool—for gallantry in raids on enemy shipping off the Norwegian coast. Subsequently reported missing (see above).

DISTINGUISHED FLYING MEDAL

Sgt. William Chas. Samuel, R.A.F.—has participated in many sorties, on a number of which he acted as navigator and more recently as captain. He has at all times displayed great determination and invariably presses home his attacks despite the fiercest opposition. Throughout, his skill, resolution and devotion to duty have been worthy of the highest praise.

GEORGE MEDAL

A/C 1 Kenneth Beard, treasurer's dept., Keighley—ammunition in an aircraft began to explode as the machine landed after a fighter sweep. Aircraftman Beard climbed to the main plane, unfasted the gun panels, and released the ammunition tank, which was burning fiercely, thereby saving the aircraft and probably the lives of other air crews and armourers who were emptying the remaining tanks.

Lt. J. H. Haywood, R.N.V.R., 30, county architect's dept., Middlesex—for gallantry and devotion to duty when disposing of an unexploded mine.

Civilian

C.B.E.

Miss Marjorie Gambrell, S.R.N., S.C.M., Kent C.C.—for services to civil defence.

M.B.E.

J. V. Bingay, senior dental surgeon, Twickenham—for meritorious service as chief incident officer.

CORRECTION

Pilot Officer G. B. Buse, reported missing in the December journal, was a member of the South West Gloucestershire branch and not of the East Cornwall branch, as reported.

SPARE TIME is well spent in reading for a DEGREE

One of to-day's problems is that of making the best use of long war-time evenings. To those who are studiously inclined we suggest that spare time might well be occupied in reading for a Degree; not merely for the resultant material advantages, but also for the widening of outlook and development of mental abilities. Moreover, under experienced and sympathetic guidance study becomes a pleasurable occupation.

● London University Degrees are open to all. You need not attend the University. All that is necessary is to pass three exams. Matriculation (or, if you are over 23, the shorter Special Entrance Exam.), Intermediate and Final; you may study for these at home and in your own time.

● Wolsey Hall Postal Courses for the above (and also for D.P.A.) examinations are conducted by a staff of 56 University Graduates. These Courses comprise Lessons, Test Papers, Model Answers, correction of your work and solution of all difficulties by your tutors. A Guarantee is given that, in the event of failure, tuition will be continued free. Fees may be spread over the period of the Course.

● Write for PROSPECTUS (saying if your preference is for Arts, Science, Economics, Commerce, Law or Theology) to C. D. PARKER, M.A., LL.D., Director of Studies, Dept. RH24.

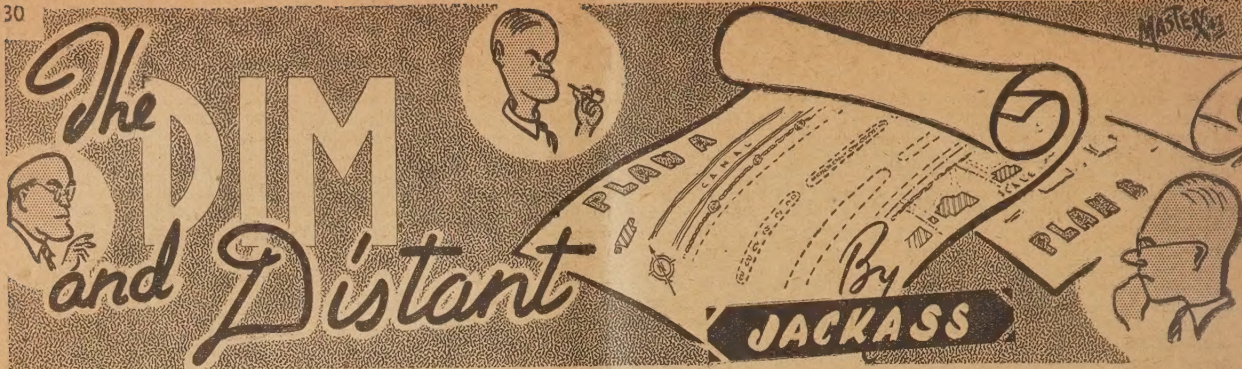
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MISCELLANEOUS

REMOVALS AND STORAGE UNDERTAKEN BY DAVIES TURNER & Co., Ltd. (Est. 1870), 4, Lower Belgrave Street, S.W.1. SLO 5121.

PLAY THE PIANO in 3 months. New home method. Write for Free Lesson.—Klavarskribo 1 (ER), St. Paul's Churchyard, E.C.4.



WE are not responsive to propaganda in Much Cowslip. We scoff at stories of Cabinet Ministers queueing humbly at local food offices for ration books, or ducal offspring serving with the Forces as "ordinary privates." We are not even impressed when silver-haired old ladies give threepences from their first old-age pensions towards a new aircraft carrier. We are ready steeled against the day when tobacco famine brings pictures of the Prime Minister smoking herbal mixture (packed with vitamins) in a clay dodger. We shall still jaywalk even if shown views, from appropriate angles, of Moore-Brabazon wearing a white S for Safety on the seat of his trousers in the 'blackout. We are propaganda-proof.

Nevertheless, we have come to share the general belief that this war is as good as won. We are complacent, and proud of it; for genuine, smug, self-satisfied complacency is surely the ultimate pinnacle of confidence and high morale. We have progressed beyond thinking about winning the war to the new and therefore more attractive topic of what to do after it is won.

Others have thought along similar lines, encouraged by vague assurances from politicians of all parties that everything wrong with the world shall be made delectably right. In the past, the broken arc—in the peace, the perfect round! But while they concern themselves largely with new systems of government, projected manipulations of finance, methods of international control, and ensuring more work for all (whereas we all want more leisure), our trend of thought was limited, local, and logical. What, we asked ourselves, should be done in Much Cowslip when peace broke out?

To find out, our Council appointed a committee. One of our shrewdest wits (myself) has said there are three ways to approach a problem—to solve it, shelve it, or appoint a committee. Often the latter pair are synonymous, but to decide to do nothing has a dignity lacking in mere failure to do anything. So the Council appointed a committee.

Purely for his prestige value, they invited the Chairman of the Council to preside. To represent big business, they chose Councillor Gumble, proprietor of our only provision store, and the Clerk insisted on serving in his official capacity as a restraining influence. Blatherpatch was appointed on the strength of having thrice failed his town-planning final, while I was pressed into service so that I could be appointed minuting secretary. To elect to such a committee two of the officials who would have to make its fancies fact was sufficiently unusual, but worse was to follow. To represent the prospective tenants of our brave new world, two members of the general public were co-opted in Ephraim Hodges and Josiah Jubb, who virtually selected themselves, being the only two inhabitants who had never been summoned for non-payment of rates. Obviously, they had either a praiseworthy

interest in local government or a wholesome fear of bureaucracy.

The first meeting of the committee proved the choice of personnel unwise. Blatherpatch and I had taken the promise of a new world literally, whereas the Clerk and Councillor Gumble were convinced that a small patch here and there on the old one was all that was possible or necessary. Our two ratepayers naturally wanted every possible improvement, plus a drastic reduction in local and national taxation, while our Chairman thought such rigid control of money and materials would be inevitable for many years that only absolutely essential work would be permitted.

However, Blatherpatch and I put forward a reconstruction scheme based on the best principles of town-planning. We envisaged a widening of our only street from twenty feet of cobbles to ninety feet of smooth concrete, flanked on one side by the noble Cowslip Canal (cleaned and improved beyond recognition), and on the other by lawns and gardens backed by flowering shrubs. At one end a palace of steel and glass would house the new Council Offices (or the local branch of the Regional Commissioner), while at the other its counterpart would hold the welfare services, hospital, school, and related departments. Subsidiary roads led to orderly groups of varied houses, all with large gardens, while at one point a noble twelve-storey crescent was labelled "Universal Stores, including hair-dressing, cafe, dance hall, hotel, and public house." In the extreme background of our sketch a small tunnel into the ground was

marked "To sites for underground factories, car parks and hangars."

Blatherpatch expounded. The beauty of the thoroughfare, he urged, was sufficient justification for its width, irrespective of volume of traffic. The Universal Stores, replacing a multiplicity of small shops, was desirable economically and for convenience sake. The underground factory sites were based on our experience of air warfare and the certainty that any future sample would be twenty times worse. The committee would note that many more houses were provided than our present population could need, but the execution of such a vast scheme would cause an influx of workpeople. Similarly, their needs would warrant the shopping facilities and social services suggested. The final stage of the scheme would be the completion of the underground factory sites, by which time we could reasonably hope that the next war would be at least in prospect. Private enterprise (if it still existed) and the then Minister of Supply would rush to acquire such sites, and so would absorb all the labour released by completion of the scheme.

The estimated cost was roughly three hundred million pounds. Interest on such an amount would be nine million pounds per year, which could be provided by launching a further loan every year, the interest charge on which would be £270,000 annually. This in turn could be similarly borrowed at a cost of £8,100 per year, which could be raised at an annual interest charge of £243. If the Council shrank from such expenditure, we could even borrow that for £8. Thus, by paying £8 per year, using the amount so raised as interest on a further loan, and repeating the process as required, any amount could be raised by a small initial outlay. He believed a similar system was in use in all the best financial circles. If it was the size of the final figure which frightened them, he suggested they should pretend that the war continued a year longer than proves to be the case—whereupon no one would notice our small items.

The Clerk said he didn't quite see where the catch was, but he was certain one existed. The Chairman didn't believe sufficient glass and steel remained to build places of that size. Councillor Gumble asked whether he could be proprietor of the Universal Stores, and our two ratepayers objected strongly to any suggestion of saddling the rate account with an expense of £8 per year.

Finally, it was agreed to call our scheme "Plan A," for use "if circumstances permit after the war." The Clerk was instructed to prepare an alternative "Plan B," providing for wooden huts as required for housing and other purposes, and for the widening of Cowslip Road by six inches outside Councillor Gumble's shop—his frontage to be purchased for "an agreed amount."

Wise in our generation, Blatherpatch and I have already handed "Plan A" to the Salvage Officer. Probably by now it's a munition of war.



... handed "Plan A" to the Salvage Officer...

Higher NALGO Subscriptions with Two New Benefits ³¹ for Members Recommended

THE future of the National Arbitration and Conditions of Employment Order as it affects local government officers, revision of NALGO's subscription rates, the introduction of a free death benefit and legal defence scheme for all members, and the preparation of a permanent record of the achievements of local government officers during the war, were among important matters before the Emergency Executive of the National Executive Council when it met in London On January 10.

The Committee heard with great regret of the death of Mr. A. G. M. Archibald, one of the oldest members of the Council and, until his retirement some months ago, senior vice-president and one of the Association's trustees. After Mr. A. A. Garrard, junior vice-president, had paid tribute to Mr. Archibald's long and valuable service to NALGO, the meeting stood for a moment in silence.

Mr. Garrard, who had been chairman of the emergency committee since it was formed on the outbreak of war, resigned following his appointment as vice-president. Mr. F. H. Harrod, the new chairman of the N.E.C., was appointed to succeed him, with Mr. E. A. S. Young as vice-chairman.

National Arbitration Order.—It was reported that the Minister of Labour and National Service had considered the position created by the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the Bolton case and proposed to amend Defence (General) Regulation 58 AA, under which the National Arbitration Order was made, by adding a new regulation to the following effect:

On reference to the National Arbitration Tribunal of a trade dispute relating to a matter involving the exercise by any person of a power or discretion vested in him by or under any enactment, the Tribunal shall have power, notwithstanding anything in the enactment, to proceed with the reference and by its award to direct that power or discretion shall be exercised in such manner as may be provided by the award;

Provided that nothing in this paragraph shall affect any power or discretion conferred by section one of the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act, 1939, or section one of the Police and Firemen (War Service) Act, 1939, or by corresponding enactments in Northern Ireland.

The committee agreed that the Minister's proposal would not assist NALGO in the Bolton case and failed to meet the Association's claims. It was, therefore, decided to continue negotiations with the Minister and to press for amendment of the National Arbitration Order on the lines previously laid down, namely:

1. That the decisions of provincial Whitley councils be regarded as "recognised terms and conditions" for the areas they cover;
2. That Part I of the Order be amended to make it clear that it relates to trade disputes in a trade or industry as defined in Article 7 of the Order (which specifically includes local government);
3. That the definition of "workman" in the Order be amended to include any officer of a local authority.
4. That the proposed amendments be so framed as to enable disputes arising from the failure of a local authority to make up war service pay to be dealt with by the National Arbitration Tribunal.

It was further decided to proceed with an appeal to the House of Lords against the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the Bolton case.

NALGO Subscriptions.—In April, 1940, the House and Accounts sub-committee was asked to explore the financial needs of

NALGO after the war and to consider any revision which might be necessary in the scales of subscriptions. In its report, now before the emergency executive, the sub-committee pointed out that the immediate post-war period would present many difficult problems and would strengthen the growing demand for more divisional organisers and greater decentralisation. To solve these problems and

THINGS TO COME ?



This alarming foretaste of the future of a local government warrior is reproduced from an airgraph letter sent by Aircraftman George McBride, former librarian of Knotty Ash Library, Liverpool, and now serving in the Near East.

meet this demand, a greater income would be essential, together with reasonable reserves sufficient to enable the Association to face any challenge to salaries and service conditions. For these reasons, the sub-committee recommended an all-round increase in subscriptions, combined with a revision of the salary scale on which they are based, designed to spread the burden more fairly.

The new rates, if approved, would make possible the granting of two new benefits long desired by branches and conference—namely a permanent death benefit scheme and a scheme of free legal defence for every member—and such schemes were included in the sub-committee's recommendations:

DEATH BENEFIT.—A payment of £2 after five years continuous membership, increasing to £4 after ten years, £6 after 15 years, and £10 after 20 years. The sub-committee pointed out that it should be possible, in a few years, to raise the maximum payment to a higher figure.

LEGAL DEFENCE POLICY.—The issue to each member in continuous membership of a policy entitling him to free legal advice, and, in approved cases, defence and indemnity.

The death benefit, it was pointed out, was not an insurance scheme; it was a form of rebate to the representatives of a member who died whilst still in the service, and would be contingent on continuous membership of NALGO. The legal defence policy would be of first-rate importance to all members, and would mean a substantial saving to many who now contribute to special legal defence insurances.

After some minor criticism on points of detail, the emergency executive decided to recommend the N.E.C. to approve these proposals and submit them to Conference for adoption.

War Achievements of Local Government.—It was agreed that NALGO should initiate the collection of all useful material available for the preparation of a permanent record of the wartime achievements of local government.

Whitsun Conference.—Inquiry having shown that it would be impossible to obtain the use of a hall suitable for the meeting of conference on Sunday, May 24, it was decided that it should be held on Monday and Tuesday,

May 25 and 26—the Tuesday session being for the morning only, leaving the afternoon free for annual meetings of the ancillaries.

Nurses' Salaries.—It was reported that the "Rushcliffe" committee on nurses' salaries had completed the first stage of its work, and that the NALGO representatives hoped to present a full report at an early meeting of the emergency executive or of the N.E.C.

Midwives' Salaries.—NALGO has been invited to be represented on another committee which the Minister of Health is setting up to deal with the salaries of midwives. It was agreed that these representatives should be the N.E.C. members already sitting on the Rushcliffe committee.

Those attending the meeting included Messrs. F. H. Harrod (Chairman), H. Allen, J. T. Baker, W. A. N. Baker, A. G. Bolton, R. W. Coppock, Miss E. Dawson, Messrs. A. B. Day, G. S. Fraser, D. L. Griffiths, P. H. Harrod, S. Lord, E. H. Mason, C. J. Newman, T. Nolan, A. Denton Ogden, E. J. Stead, L. H. Taylor, J. H. Warren, and E. A. S. Young. Apologies for non-attendance were received from Messrs. J. L. Holland, W. H. Leigh-Smith, G. Lilwelyn, D. J. Parry, A. Pinches, E. L. Riley, and C. A. W. Roberts.

Conference Time-Table

THIS year's NALGO Conference will be held in the Large Hall, Friends' House, Euston Road, London (just opposite Euston Station) on Monday and Tuesday, May 25 and 26. The time-table will be:

Monday, May 25

- 9.30 a.m.—12.30 p.m.—Conference.
- 2.15 p.m.—5 p.m.—Conference.
- 5.15 p.m.—Building Society annual meeting.

Tuesday, May 26

- 9.30 a.m.—12.30 p.m.—Conference (final session)
- 2.30 p.m.—Logomia annual meeting.
- 4.40 p.m.—Approved Society annual meeting.
- 5.30 p.m.—Provident Society annual meeting.

Branches—and especially those with new officers, unfamiliar with conference procedure—should note the following time-table, which was communicated to branch secretaries in Circular 15/Gen/41 on December 19 and which must be strictly observed.

March 1—All motions for inclusion in the agenda, together with the names and addresses of delegates, to be received at headquarters—NALGO Centre, Croyde, Braunton, N. Devon—by 5 p.m. (They may of course be sent earlier, but this is the last date.)

April 1—Notices of motion will be published in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, and copies of the report of the N.E.C. and the preliminary agenda will be circulated to delegates.

April 15—Amendments to motions on the agenda must be received at headquarters by 5 p.m.

May 1—Amendments to the agenda will be published in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

May 8—Agenda and list of representatives will be circulated to delegates. Last date for receipt at headquarters of notifications by branches wishing to divide their voting strength.

The branch circular also contained an explanatory statement on the superannuation position of whole-time temporary officers (published in the December journal), details about the call-up of women, and of the facilities offered to branches by the Town and Country Planning Association, with which NALGO is now affiliated, an appeal to branches to co-operate in the work of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee, and a Ministry of Health circular on the effect on local government staffs of the gradual abolition of the schedule of reserved occupations. Members seeking further information on these matters should apply to their branch secretary.

CIRCULARITIS RAMPANT

Drastic Remedies Proposed

NOW that drastic changes have been made in the schedule of reserved occupations which will inevitably further deplete already over-burdened staffs, is it not an opportune moment for all local authorities to refuse to tolerate any longer the confusion and chaotic state of affairs created by the never-ending "blitz" of circulars and instructions we have to endeavour to understand and deal with from day to day?

I have compared notes with many of my colleagues in this country from North, South, East, and West, and am forced to the conclusion that colossal and costly blunders have been and are still being made as a result of unintelligible and lengthy government department circulars, etc., etc., which effectively prevent any two persons having both feet firmly planted on this earth from interpreting and acting upon them in the same way.

To prevent a complete breakdown of the local government machine I suggest that immediate removal of grit from the bearings could be effected in the following way:

1. The entire abolition of many useless and ineffective satellite government departments created since the war began.
2. The internment for the "duration" of the personnel thereof, together with the literature for which they have been responsible and statements of the resulting wasteful expenditure.
3. The retention only of those government departments possessing personnel with the initiative and capacity to recognise that quality in others, and the ability to understand that city engineers and other responsible local government officers are anxious to get on with the job of winning the war in the least possible time and at the least possible cost.
4. A 99 per cent cut in the number of returns required and circulars issued, the remaining 1 per cent to be written in plain English, using as few words as possible.
5. Compulsory co-operation and collaboration between heads of those departments still thought to be necessary, to ensure that circulars issued by any department are not in conflict with those issued by another.
6. No circulars to be issued unless they are considered to be of vital necessity in connection with the war effort.

If the present example is a foretaste of regional things to come, then efficient local government administration in post-war Britain will surely perish. We must at all costs prevent an extension of a system of administration which thrives on terminological inexactitudes and discourages responsibility by encouraging the science and art of "passing the buck."

CITY ENGINEER.

This letter is referred to in a leading article on page 21.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

New Administrators Needed

THERE is little cause for complaint with the system of local government; where reform is needed is in the selection of the best councillors. The fact that the electorate is free to appoint the candidates of its choice does not guarantee that the best are chosen.

To-day, as a rule, a councillor must have money to afford the requirements of his office. Only recently and to a limited degree has there been opportunity for representation of the working classes.

To a business man, election to the local council may benefit his business. This should not be. A member of a local authority should not be able, by virtue of that position, to foster his own interests. A councillor's efforts should

be directed solely in the interests of those he serves, without thought of financial or other gain for himself.

We need the best possible brains to control local government, and to secure them ratepayers must be prepared to pay. There might also be a graduating scheme for various posts. Usually, for example, the mayoralty goes to

READERS' FORUM

Once again we must apologise to the many readers whose letters pressure on space has compelled us to hold over—together with "At Random" and other popular features. So far as possible, they will be published next month. Letters for the March number must reach the Editor, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex, not later than February 13.

the most successful business man, or the most charitably minded, public spirit taking a secondary place.

Were local government reform to be developed along these lines, we might reach a high and intelligent standard of representation, able to provide efficient service.

L. G. O.

The Voice of Youth

BEING strongly of the opinion that the best results can be obtained when the members of a committee consist of a mixture of younger and older members, I endeavoured to obtain from Headquarters the ages of the 14 members of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee, but was not successful. The committee appears to be exclusively male. Some of the appointed members are now retired from the service, all are "getting on," but all are doubtless of excellent calibre and experience. From the photographs of some of them appearing in the journal, they appear to be a reasonably middle-aged body of men, provided that the photographs were recently taken.

May I respectfully suggest that their ages be published, to enable anyone interested to ponder whether ability to plan reconstruction is the prerogative of men of position and years, or whether the generation mainly concerned with active participation in this war (and not the last one) might not also bring some of that vigour and forward vision to this subject, which is as important as experience of the recent and more distant past.

ONE WITH NO AXE TO GRIND.

We do not know the ages of members of the Reconstruction Committee, nor would we publish them if we did, regarding the question of age as irrelevant to the consideration of local government reconstruction. We would, however, assure our correspondent that there will be ample opportunity for the younger generation to contribute to the discussion of reconstruction; every NALGO branch has been asked to form its own reconstruction sub-committee to work in close collaboration with the main committee and to submit its views and suggestions.

TRADE DISPUTES ACT

N.E.C. and Repeal

SO! Members of the N.E.C. realise there is "an underground feeling of unrest and criticism in the Association."

Those who criticise are glad that recognition of this fact is becoming apparent to some of our leaders, but doubtless regret, with me, that more criticism will be engendered by the report that NALGO is asking to be heard by the Ministry of Health before the suggested repeal of Section 6 of the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act, 1927. Does this mean that the N.E.C. is opposed to such repeal? That opposition is possible will surprise most members, but at least one member of the

council favours such action. NALGO is skating on thin ice if this possibility has foundation in fact, because every genuine trade unionist will be glad when the act is revised in this particular.

Maybe fears are groundless and the Association is merely endeavouring to ensure that we are not precluded from sharing in potential membership which repeal may make possible. Let us hope so.

In the meantime, we anxiously await a detailed statement and pray that NALGO is not going to blunder.

Leicester Branch.

JACK HILL.
(Hon. Secretary)

MUNICIPAL SALARIES

An Illuminating Comparison

IN reply to questions from a member of the Aberdeen council, the city treasurer recently gave some information about the council's scale of salaries.

In brief, the questions were, what would be paid to the technical officers mentioned below on completion of their apprenticeship under the council's scale of salaries, assuming in each case that the officer passed his higher leaving certificate at the age of 17. The answers were—

Architect, age 23—£135 per annum.

Quantity surveyor, age 22—£120 per annum.

Civil engineer, age 22—£120 per annum.

A further question: "What salary would be paid to a school teacher having an honours degree at 22 years?" brought forth the answer—£250 per annum.

I am aware that NALGO does not exist for the purpose of obtaining increases in salaries, but I suggest that the above matter might not be without interest to our members.

ABERDEEN TECHNICAL OFFICER.

SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS

No Bonus for Them

WHILST I am not opposed to a war bonus to officials on full salary, I notice that no mention was made in the article "Bonus Boloney Exposed," in the January Journal, of a bonus to retired officials, many of whom must live on a small amount of superannuation.

Many elderly ratepayers invested in house property to provide an income for their old age. Some of this property has been blitzed and, whilst compensation will eventually be paid, they are meanwhile receiving no rents. Other ratepayers invested in stocks and shares, on which no dividends are now being paid. Many shopkeepers must find it difficult to earn a living since they are unable to obtain goods to sell.

We have all to make sacrifices in this war (some more so than others), and do so cheerfully, but let us keep a sense of balance and consideration.

FAIRPLAY.

NALGO, in conjunction with the T.U.C., has twice made strong representations on behalf of superannuated officers to the Minister of Health, and the Civil Service National Whitley Council has made similar representations to the Treasury, but always the necessary legislation has been refused. We shall persist in our efforts.

"TEMPORARIES" IN NALGO

A "Permanent's" Grievance

WE regret that we are unable to associate ourselves wholeheartedly with the welcome to NALGO extended by the President to "temporaries," as their recruitment may well produce a post-war situation unfavourable to our "permanent" members.

The President's promise that the interests of those who have joined the Forces will be protected does not altogether reassure us.

(Continued on page 34)

AYE, LAD—THERE'S NO INCOME TAX TO PAY ON THEM



My missus and I have already got £30 in National Savings Certificates. They will be worth £41 in ten years' time and we don't have to pay a penny piece Income Tax on the increase. You don't wonder we're going on buying them.

**NATIONAL
SAVINGS CERTIFICATES**
The "Tax Free" Investment

(Continued from page 32)

The fact is that the "conflict of interests" does not necessarily occur in individual appointments, but is a perpetual conflict, inasmuch as the "temporaries" may be placed on the permanent staff in a higher grade than junior "permanents" with longer service—thus filling up the higher grades to the obvious detriment of these juniors. This has recently happened in our own department and is most discouraging to junior members who have for some years performed, for lower salaries, duties at least as responsible as those of the "temporaries," in the belief that their status as "permanents" counter-balanced the monetary difference.

The younger officers (who are at the same time older N A L G O members) find little satisfaction in the increased membership figures achieved by means which they consider prejudicial to their future.

TWO PREDICTORS.

This problem, which is bound to become more acute, strengthens the argument for admission of "temporaries" into N A L G O rather than that for their exclusion. For, while the exclusion of "temporaries" can do nothing to solve it, their admission can create a strong branch able to tackle it in the only practicable way—through negotiation in a local joint committee in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

WHOM DO WE SERVE?

The Tale of a Horse

READERS' FORUM teems with vague terms and muddle-headed ideas. E. L. Gabrielson, for instance, in the January number asks: Whom do local government servants serve?

If he will imagine a horse harnessed to a greengrocer's cart to represent the rank-and-file member, then his chief will be represented by the greengrocer's assistant, and the town council by the owner of the business.

The horse is expected to be loyal to his master and is encouraged to do his duty by being introduced to a whip, or a piece of sugar, according to the ideas of the man in charge of the cart.

The answer, therefore, is that rank-and-file officers serve only the authority employing them, not the other people mentioned by Gabrielson.

The "fundamental" aim of each officer is not to keep the rates down—it is merely to keep his stomach full and his trousers (or skirt) up.

Finally, if followers with right ideas can change a leader with wrong ones, why call him a leader? What are "right" ideas? My own opinion is: abolish both leaders and followers. We need only take one peep at the world to-day to see the result of leadership-worship.

S. HARRIS.

"LET THE WARRIORS WASH" An Improvement, But—

REFERENCE to my letter printed in your issue of November, 1940, will recall that this gem of literature started a prolonged, and sometimes amusing, topic in subsequent numbers. May I, therefore, on behalf of my fellow servicemen who have enjoyed hospitality from their N A L G O colleagues, collectively and individually, extend thanks.

It is still a fact to be deplored, however, that so little is being done. The actual number of branches throughout the country escapes me, but I am certain that it is considerably larger than the number mentioned in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE each month as offering entertainment to members, sometimes stationed in remote and often unfriendly places.

Perhaps the lead for an improvement will be

(Continued at foot of next column)

VOICES OF THE BRANCHES

"Jackass" Again Looks at NALGO Magazines

I ASKED for it!

When, in my first effort on this page, I urged editors to write to me, I expected the kind of response I used to get when, as an editor, I appealed for contributions. Instead, letters arrived in shoals—including one from a police inspector, editing a county constabulary magazine, who confesses to being a regular reader of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE. I must remember to commit my next crime in his area.

Some of those letters are still unanswered at the moment of writing; but answered they shall be, every one.

I swear it!

Mag Parade

Thanks for all your Journals. Space forbids mention of any but those not reviewed last time. Keep sending them.

Leeds Guildman—Editor Murphy sent me a year's issues. As I expected (knowing him) the style is frank and direct—even provocative. Outstanding feature is the detailed and entertaining way in which branch executive meetings and district committee meetings are reported. Other editors could usefully copy this. Never mind what the executive think about it.

At Your Service (Blackburn)—A clearly printed production of clean appearance. This issue was the annual report, so I cannot judge the usual type of contents.

Manchester Guild Journal—Retains that polish which makes it distinctive, but (dare I say it?) savours rather too much of the "medium for the exposition of the executive's viewpoint." Are there no branch critics? Or is the branch executive right every time?

Local Notes (Peterborough)—Lively and interesting. Mainly concerned (as it should be) with branch news.

Srips (Southgate)—A well-produced cyclostyled journal, but to judge from the contents the only local government activity at Southgate is firewatching.

Staff (St. Pancras)—A really good production. Branch and personal news simply and clearly presented with a heaven of light relief.

(Continued from preceding column)

taken by my own branch. And then, again, perhaps not.

Here's hoping, anyway.

A. H. HARMAN, Cpl., R.A.F.
N A L G O to-day has about 700 branches and 120,000 members. Of those, 21 branches and five individual members have so far offered entertainment and hospitality in one form or another to members in the Forces. Is that the best we can do?

LAND NATIONALISATION

Who Creates the Value?

REPLYING to the first paragraph of "Deva's" letter under the above heading, I agree that there is no great incentive to anyone to make improvements. Would any political party, however, at present advocate that improvements in one's income, due to one's own exertions, should not be taxed?

As regards the second paragraph, who did create the increase in value? There could be a long argument as to this, but it is unnecessary as the whole point is that if land were nationalised, persons like myself would be the sufferers. My freehold would no longer exist, as there would be a ground landlord. I, therefore, am to be penalised because someone in the past may have made a profit out of the land I bought on which my house stands.

112, North Road, P. J. SCRIMSHIRE.

Hertford.

This correspondence is now closed.

A new journal, and thus doomed by the latest paper restriction order—a great pity.

Guildhall Gazette (Middlesex County)—An attractive title page invites attention to well-balanced and well-written contents.

Staff Journal (Hammersmith)—A cyclostyled journal of neat and sturdy appearance. As good as any cyclostyled issue I have seen.

Herts NALGO Newsletter—I like the contents, but not the style of presentation. The oversize cover, the mixture of print and cyclostyling, and the irregular cutting of the pages, combine to give it a ragged appearance.

In addition, I have received Broadsheets from Rickmansworth, Westminster, South Shields (hadn't they a journal once?), Stoke Newington, and Portsmouth.

Most creditable, when one knows the difficulties surmounted, is the Stoke Newington effort, but easily the best from every other point of view is that of Portsmouth branch.

Second Thoughts

I specially regret that the new paper regulations will compel the suspension of the **Glasgow Junior Officer**, NALGO's only Youth Section Journal. Here's to its early re-appearance!

Congratulations to Southwark on the marked improvement in style and appearance of its magazine, and a bouquet to Ealing for so neatly compressing the same volume of contents into much smaller space.

Self Advertisement

Looking through such a number of journals, I am struck by the amount of copy about civil defence duties. Personally, I think rather too much is written about our special wartime activities, to the exclusion of news of normal local government work. It might be useful now and then to remind members and the general public (especially councils) that all this firewatching, controlling, guarding, and wardening, is additional to the ordinary day-by-day services of local government, which have been carried on under difficulties with an efficiency which private enterprise can hardly equal, and certainly cannot excel. Editors might obtain good copy by asking local chief officers to write on how their particular departments have been affected by the war, and how the new troubles have been overcome.

If civil defence duties are as general among local government officers as they seem to be, might it not be a good idea to make a survey of your branch members, what they do and how they do it, and publish a serious article on "The Hogsnoton Official at War"—setting out the voluntary service of all kinds being given by your colleagues? It might surprise members of the council and members of the public (especially if you are wise enough to send copies of your journals to the local Press for quotation purposes).

Approved Society SOS!

THE NALGO Approved Society is being so inundated with applications for membership under the new Health Insurance Act that it is impossible to acknowledge their receipt. The staff is dealing with the applications and will send out insurance cards as quickly as possible—but in the meantime it appeals to applicants to be patient.

Many applications are also being received for medical cards. These are not supplied by approved societies, but by insurance committees after they have been notified of eligibility by the Ministry of Health. The Approved Society is notifying the Ministry of all members entitled to medical benefit, but the number is so great that delay is inevitable.

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A. G. M. ARCHIBALD

WE regret to record the death, at his home in Skelmorlie, Ayrshire, on January 2, of Mr. Adam G. M. Archibald, for 14 years one of the Scottish members of the National Executive Council and vice-president of the Association from 1938 until last year, when ill-health compelled him to resign.

Mr. Archibald joined the Association when the Glasgow branch was formed in 1919, and almost from the outset he became active in



promoting NALGO interests. For many years he was vice-chairman of the Scottish Council and in 1935 was elected chairman, holding office until his retirement. He was elected to the N.E.C. in 1926.

In official life Mr. Archibald was an analytical chemist with Glasgow corporation, his principal duties being concerned with the sewage purification works at Dalmarnock.

The son of a Lanarkshire schoolmaster, he spent his early years in the country and continued through his life to love country ways and country folk. He was a staunch supporter of the Church of Scotland, in which he held the office of Elder, and last year was elected a representative to the General Assembly.

Joint Industrial Council—When the council met, on January 9 the staff side re-submitted their claim to a cost of living bonus of 15 per cent on the first £250 of all salaries. The employers' side rejected the claim and made an offer which would have meant a slight increase in bonus on salaries up to £250, no increase on salaries between £250 and £350, and a flat rate increase of £10 on salaries between £350 and £490. This inadequate offer the staff side rejected, again suggesting that the question be referred to independent arbitration. The question was further considered at the annual meeting of the council on January 23, but again no agreement was reached, and the proposed reference to arbitration was remitted to the executive committee.

District Committee—The annual meeting inevitably means changes in the personnel of the committee and often in the office-bearers. Changes in office-bearers of the Scottish District Committee have been comparatively few in the past and the position which arose at the meeting held at Edinburgh on December 20, 1941, when new officers were appointed for almost every office, must be unique. Those appointed were:

Chairman—Mr. R. ADAMS (Edinburgh)

Vice-Chairman—Mr. S. H. BRODIE

(Glasgow)

Secretary—Mr. J. M. ANDERSON (Glasgow)

Treasurer—Mr. D. GALBRAITH (Paisley)

Auditor—Mr. A. J. MCINTOSH (Aberdeen)

Mr. J. M. MORTIMER, formerly divisional secretary and secretary of the district committee, was handed a substantial gift of war savings certificates on his retirement from office. Mr. H. SLATER, seconded to Scotland as divisional secretary, was welcomed to the committee, which also expressed thanks to Mr. J. WEIR NEILSON on his retirement from the committee; a presentation of furniture had also been made to Mr. Neilson.

The following were appointed to represent the association on the staff side of the Joint Industrial Council: Messrs. R. ADAMS (Edinburgh), S. H. BRODIE (Glasgow), J. PENNY (Dundee), T. SPENCE (Dumbarton), and H. SLATER (divisional secretary).

It was reported that Dr. H. E. SEILER, deputy medical officer of health, Edinburgh,

had agreed to represent Scotland on the special committee set up by the National Executive Council to consider the scheme under the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust.

A special sub-committee submitted a report on the "Blueprint for a Stronger NALGO," published in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE last July. It was felt that time did not permit of detailed discussion of the report and a special meeting of the district committee is to be held to consider it.

The committee decided against organising Scottish summer schools in war-time. It agreed in principle with a suggestion that temporary salary increases should be given to an officer assuming more senior duties during the absence for a period through illness of a higher-graded officer, and referred the matter to the staff side of the Joint Industrial Council.

The committee also agreed to continue its support of the Workers' Educational Association and the Scottish Youth Hostels Association.

Department of Health—Nurses' Salaries Committee—The inaugural meeting of this committee was held on January 8 under the chairmanship of PROFESSOR T. M. TAYLOR, the divisional secretary representing the association. It was agreed that the employees' panel should draw up scales of salaries for nursing staffs and submit them to the employers' panel, after which a further meeting of the committee would be arranged.

Kilmarnock "Smoker"—Most branches have now held their annual meetings. The Kilmarnock branch held a most successful and well-attended "smoker" on December 17, at which NALGO members in the Forces stationed in the area experienced true Scottish hospitality. Mr. R. F. Donnelly, branch secretary, was the organiser.

Adam Archibald

Members in Scotland will learn with deep regret of the death of the late chairman of the district committee, Mr. Adam Archibald. An obituary notice appears in the adjoining column, but these notes would not be complete without recording the invaluable services rendered to members in Scotland by Mr. Archibald or without reference to the great loss Scottish officers have sustained by his death.

NEW N.E.C. MEMBER**Mr. Norman Dracup**

DESPITE the absence of elections, the National Executive Council continues to recruit new blood almost as freely, and certainly of the same high quality, as in peace time. The Yorkshire district committee is to be congratulated on its selection of the latest addition to the Council—Mr. Norman Dracup, chairman and vice-president of the Bradford branch, appointed in place of the late Mr. J. H. Clark.

Mr. Dracup has served in the accountancy section of the city treasurer's office for the past 22 years, and is an enthusiastic worker for NALGO. He is keenly interested



Mr. Norman Dracup

in all salaries and service conditions problems, and is a prominent member of the Yorkshire district committee (where he sits on the executive and the service conditions and propaganda sub-committees) and of the Yorkshire joint council. Until recently he edited the Bradford "Quarterly Review," one of the outstanding branch magazines.

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED**Superannuation**

Have officers who are contributors under the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, or who are local superannuation act contributors, and have suffered a loss of registration remuneration in consequence of the Local Elections and Register of Electors (Temporary Provisions) Acts, 1939-41, an option of making superannuation contributions in respect of the remuneration they have lost, or are they compelled to make such contributions?

Section 2 of the Local Elections and Register of Electors (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1940, provides that any contributory employee or local act contributor who received remuneration for registration work in the standard year (i.e., the last year before 1940 in which such work was done by him) is entitled to contribute in respect of that remuneration to the appropriate superannuation fund in the following years in which he is not required to do such work by reason of the Local Elections and Register of Electors (Temporary Provisions) Acts, 1939-41.

He is, therefore, not compelled to make these superannuation contributions. Officers who have been in receipt of registration remuneration and who are likely to retire on superannuation within the next five years or so will probably decide to make these superannuation contributions to avoid any reduc-

tion in superannuation, but officers who are not likely to retire within the next five years or so will probably decide not to make such contributions.

National Health Insurance

Will the National Health Insurance Act, 1941, which brings into compulsory insurance persons earning between £250 and £420 a year, give to local government officers, who now contribute voluntarily to another approved society, the opportunity to join the Nalco Approved Society as compulsorily insured persons?

No. There is a ban on transfers between approved societies for the duration of the war.

I shall become compulsorily insured on January 5, 1942, by virtue of the National Health Insurance Act, 1941: but as my remuneration will be increased beyond £420 p.a. before I have contributed for two years, I assume I shall not be able to become a voluntary contributor. Shall I get any benefit from my compulsory contributions?

Yes. You will become entitled to the services of a panel doctor forthwith, and will remain entitled to that benefit for approximately 21 months after ceasing to pay contributions. Also, if you contribute for at least 26 weeks, you will be able to qualify for sickness benefit at 12s. per week (10s. 6d. for women) for 26 weeks.



Transport's Victory Sign

THE need is NOW—thousands more wagons and lorries are urgently wanted—to carry munitions and men, coal and food and all the necessities of the nation's life. Where are those thousands of extra vehicles to come from? They can't be built, for labour and material are being employed on even more vital work.

They can be made available in one way only—by using existing wagons and lorries better. That means reducing standstill time, increasing running time, every transport user in the land speeding up his loading and unloading. Remember, just 15% saved in standstill time is equivalent to 100,000 extra wagons and lorries.

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- 4—Are your arrangements between your office and your loading staff as good as they should be? For instance, have you arranged for the immediate checking of loads?
- 5—Have you talked the matter over with the men who actually load and unload?
- 6—Do you make the most of every hour of daylight to clear loads, carrying on into the blackout when possible?

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Send 4d. in stamps to The Regent Institute (Dept. 338N), Palace Gate, London, W.8, for a copy of "Word Mastery," which gives full particulars of the Effective English Course. You will find that you can still enrol at the low pre-War fee if you enter your name promptly.

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SALARIES AND SERVICE CONDITIONS

SOUTHERN REGION

Two years ago the Essex Rivers Catchment Board became a member of the Eastern District Provincial Council and established a local joint committee. The following revised salary scales on the basis of the provincial council's recommendations have been agreed and at the same time the full national scale of cost-of-living bonus has been adopted. The agreed scales are as follows: Men: Junior and General Division: £60 (at 16): 15 (12)—£240 (at 28).

Clerical Division: £255—15 (2)—£285. £300—15 (2)—£330.

Professional, etc. Division: (A) £240+20 (3)—£300; (B) £330+20 (2)—£360; (C) £380+20 (2)—£420; (D) £440+20 (3)—£500.

Women: Junior and General Division: £50 (at 16)—10 (8)+15 (3)—£175.

Clerical Division: £180+10 (3)—£210. Professional, etc. Division: (A) £180+15 (3)—£225. (B) £240+15 (2)—£270. (C) £285+15 (2)—£315. (D) £330+15 (2)—£360.

NORTH-WESTERN AND NORTH WALES

Bootle branch has applied successfully for augmentation of the salaries of permanent officers to bring them more into line with the salaries paid to temporary officers, in respect of whom the corporation pays civil service scales and bonus. The branch is still negotiating with the council on the bonus to be paid on the salaries so increased.

Leigh branch has decided to admit temporary officers into membership and to start a recruiting campaign.

Liverpool corporation has adopted in full the female scales of the Lancashire and Cheshire Provincial Council. On the application of the association, the lady assistant at Anfield cemetery has been granted an increase in salary which brings her into line with the clerks in other sections of the department.

Oldham.—An appeal under the Essential Work (General Provisions) Order, 1941, has been successful and permission obtained for the member concerned to accept an appointment with another authority. The appellant's case was submitted to the local appeal board by the assistant divisional secretary.

An interesting and unusual case under the same Order recently arose at Rochdale C.B. A NALGO member in a "scheduled" department left the office without permission for an hour or two and was held not only

conditions of service recommended by the Mental Hospitals Joint Conciliation Committee.

South Shields C.B. has granted an increase of 5s. p.w. to the mental nurses and staff at the Harton Institution.

COST OF LIVING 29.0 p.c. UP

The Ministry of Labour cost-of-living index figure fell by one point last month to 200—representing an increase of 29.0 per cent in the cost-of-living since September, 1939.

APPROVED SOCIETY MEMBERS

● **THREE DAYS ONLY** is the time limit laid down in the National Health Insurance Act for notification of incapacity.

● **IF YOU ARE ILL**, therefore, you must **INFORM THE SOCIETY WITHIN THREE DAYS**; otherwise **YOU MAY LOSE BENEFIT**.

● If you cannot send the information within three days, you must send it **AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY**—but the time limit can be extended only if you have a good reason for delay. Ignorance of the Act is not a good reason.

● **YOU NEED NOT SEND A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE WITH THE NOTIFICATION**. That should, however, be sent as soon as possible.

● **PLEASE GIVE YOUR MEMBERSHIP NUMBER WHEN YOU WRITE.**

NALGO APPROVED SOCIETY, CROYDE, BRAUNTON, DEVON

Hospitality for Warriors

Below is a complete list of branches and individual members who have offered hospitality to NALGO members in the Forces stationed in their areas. We shall be happy to add to it.

BRANCHES

Ashton-under-Lyne.—W. B. BRADLEY, electricity works (use of Waterworks Social Club offered). Basingstoke.—Miss E. J. SMITHERS, Municipal buildings. Blackburn NALGO Sports and Social Club.—J. K. COX, 42, Victoria Street.

Burnley.—Facilities for sport and recreation (billiards, bowls, cards, darts) offered at Greenhill Club, 163a, Manchester Road.—J. M. HOLT, education offices, Manchester Road.

Cambridgeshire.—LEO MASON, Shire Hall. Chelmsford.—L. E. INNES, Essex Rivers Catchment Board, Essex Rivers House, Springfield Road.

Cheshire County.—H. JONES, 47, Walter St., Chester. Clacton-on-Sea.—Forces members welcomed at staff social, with table-tennis, etc., held each Wednesday evening, Town Hall.—Mrs. G. J. SINCLAIR, electricity dept., Town Hall.

Croydon.—Twelve members offer evening hospitality, and four are willing to entertain members in the Forces overnight. Apply L. J. BOWERS, Education Office, Katharine Street, Croydon 4433, Exr. 210.

Grimsby.—W. L. W. L. BUXTON, borough treasurer's office, Municipal Buildings, Town Hall Square (Grimsby 5514).

Hinckley, Leicestershire.—J. G. S. TOMKINS, 16, Station Road.

Ipswich.—Miss E. M. EDE, public assistance dept., Tower Street.

Isle of Wight.—S. H. MATTHEWS, County Hall, Newport, I.O.W.

Leicester.—J. HILL, City Water Offices, Bowling Green Street.

Lincoln.—Lindsey County officers hold a monthly social. Particulars from secretary, NALGO County Offices.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—V. GRANGER, Town Hall.

Rochdale.—Municipal Officers' Club, Toad Lane, invites NALGOites in the Forces to become temporary members. Billiards, table tennis, darts, cards and bar.—J. H. LEVER, Town Hall, Rochdale (Rochdale 3181).

Ware, Herts.—E. B. CULLIN, secretary of the Herts A.R.P. Recorded Music Society, will welcome music-lovers to his home, 17, Jeffries Road, Ware, by appointment, and to meetings of the society, which are usually held at 3 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month at The Priory, Ware.

Wimbledon.—Offers hospitality and facilities for sport and recreation: J. W. BABBS, borough engineer's dept., Town Hall, S.W.19.

Wrexham.—H. BROOKFIELD, borough surveyor's dept., 1, Grosvenor Road.

Yeovil.—Miss J. L. KEBBELL, B.A., Municipal Buildings.

PERSONAL

Bromsgrove.—F. W. GOODMAN, The Pines, Stourbridge Road (secretary of Bromsgrove branch).

Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire.—J. DARRICOTTE, Grove House, Grove Lane (Bramhall 306), offers "meals, bath, bed, snooker, table tennis," etc., to members, who should write or phone first.

Harrogate.—J. ELLIS, 4, Woodside (Office, Harrogate 503); home, 2808).

South Shields.—J. E. FAWCETT, "Earldene," 11, Windermere Crescent, Harton (South Shields 1000).

Stourbridge.—J. M. CLARK, Southgate, Norton Road, Stourbridge (Stourbridge 57175) (formerly a member of the Southgate branch) offers evening or overnight hospitality.

BUILDING & PROVIDENT SOCIETIES

Annual General Meetings

ANNUAL general meetings of the Nalگو Building Society and of the Nalگو Provident Society will be held in London at Whitson, at which the normal elections of the respective committees of management will take place. The attention of members of each of the societies is drawn to the following rules:

Building Society.

RULE 63.—No resolution shall be brought forward at an annual general meeting except such as may arise upon the report of the Committee of Management unless notice in writing of such resolution shall have been given to the Committee of Management at least six weeks preceding the meeting.

RULE 72.—The business of the society shall be managed by and be under the control of the Committee of Management, which shall consist of the three trustees and the treasurer (all of whom shall be ex-officio members), and eight members of the society, four of whom shall be nominated by the National Executive Council of the National Association of Local Government Officers, the remainder being four ordinary members of the society other than members of the National Executive Council elected by ballot amongst the members present and entitled to vote at the annual general meeting.

RULE 73.—A member of the Committee of Management who ceases to be employed in the local government service shall cease to be eligible for membership of the Committee of Management after the annual general meeting following the date of his leaving the local government service.

RULE 75.—Any member intended for election as a member of the Committee of Management other than those nominated by the National Executive Council of the National Association of Local Government Officers shall be nominated in writing by two other members, and such nomination shall be left at the chief office of the society, directed to the secretary, at least six weeks preceding the said meeting. The retiring members shall, subject to Rule 73, be eligible for re-election without nomination, and if re-elected shall be considered, for all purposes of rotation, as new members of the Committee of Management.

Notice of the date, time and place of such meeting, stating the business to be done, will be served upon every member at least seven days before the meeting, in accordance with Rule 67.

NALGO Examinations in Nazi Camps

NALGO examinations are to be held in the prisoner of war camps in Germany. Several members who are prisoners are keen to continue their studies—already the Nalگو Correspondence Institute has sent out ten complete courses—and now arrangements have been made through the Prisoners of War Department of the British Red Cross for the examinations to be held wherever there are members wishing to sit for them.

The usual examinations for members at home will be held on May 13, 14, and 15, provided sufficient entries are received. The centres will be announced later. Application forms, obtainable from the education department, NALGO Centre, 10, Croydon, Braunton, Devon, must be returned, completed, by March 1.

Provident Society.

RULE 19, Section 1.—The society shall have the following officers: three trustees, treasurer, secretary, accountant and a Committee of Management, which shall consist of the trustees, treasurer and eight other members of the society. The trustees, treasurer and four of the members of the Committee of Management shall be ordinary or honorary members of the society; and the remaining four members of the Committee of Management shall be ordinary members of the society, other than members of the National Executive Council of the association.

RULE 26, Section 4.—... Notice of any business to be brought before the annual general meeting shall be delivered in writing to the secretary not later than the first day of March in each year.

SECTION 5.—Every nomination of a candidate for election at a general meeting as a member of the Committee of Management (including a candidate nominated by the National Executive Council of the association in accordance with the provisions of section 2 of rule 19) shall be signed by six members. To be valid a nomination together with a written confirmation by the candidate that he is willing to stand for election must be delivered to the secretary not later than the first day of March in each year.

Notice of the date, time and place of the annual general meeting, stating the business to be done, will be served upon every member one month before the meeting in accordance with section 3 of Rule 26.

Congratulations to—

Mr. George Booth, Wallasey, on completing 44 years in local government service; during the course of which he has acted as secretary to every one of Wallasey's 29 mayors.

The NALGO prisoner-of-war (who must be named) who addressed a letter to his branch secretary at the Town Hall, Blankborough ENGLAND (FOREVER).

Mr. A. R. M. Mathewson, town chamberlain, Lerwick, on raising £335 for national and local charities by organising weekly dances at the town hall.

Mr. F. B. Sissons, York, on beginning his thirtieth year as branch treasurer.

Without Comment

TOW LAW URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

The above Council invite applications for the Temporary Appointment of CLERK OF THE COUNCIL, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER AND RATE COLLECTOR, to fill a vacancy caused by a call to the War Forces. The successful candidate will be required to devote his whole time to the work of the Council, to keep the whole of the accounts of the Council, including Rates and Cemetery, and collect all moneys including rates, and to perform all duties devolving on a Clerk to a Local Authority and Rating and Valuation Officer. Salary will be at the rate of £200 per annum, inclusive of War Bonus.

Applications, endorsed "Clerkship," stating age, qualifications, and previous experience, and accompanied by copies of two recent testimonials, must reach the undersigned not later than first post on Thursday morning, the 11th December, 1941.

Signed, WILLIAM MCINTYRE, Clerk of the Council, Council Offices, Tow Law, Co. Durham, 4 December, 1941.

have disobeyed instructions but also by his action to have "dismissed himself." NALGO immediately pointed out that the Order did not permit an employer to dismiss (except for serious misconduct) or an employee to leave without the permission of the national service officer. The authority then applied to the national service officer for permission to terminate the member's employment, but on NALGO's representations permission was refused. The authority decided to appeal against the decision and the case was referred to a local appeal board. The member was represented by the assistant divisional secretary, and after hearing his submissions the appeal was dismissed and the national service officer's decision confirmed.

NORTH EASTERN AND YORKSHIRE

Haltwhistle R.D.C. has adopted the North-Eastern provincial council salary scales for its own women staff and granted improved salaries to senior officers.

Leamington R.D.C. has increased the salary of the clerk from £400 to £475 p.a.

As a result of representations submitted through the recently established local joint committee, Morley B. has adopted the following revised scales of salaries:

Grade A: Present Scale: £45 (at 16) + 15 (5)—£120 (at 21).

New Scale: £45 (at 16) + 15 (3) + 20 (2)

Grade B: Present Scale: £132 + 12 (4)—£180.

New Scale: £145 + 15 (3)—£190.

Grade C: Present Scale: £190 + 10 (4)—£230.

New Scale: £200 + 10 (4)—£240.

Grade A is in accordance with the Whitley council scales. Grade B, to which transfer is automatic subject to the usual reservations, is also based on the Whitley council scales, but the two final increments to £225 have been omitted.

Newcastle C.B. has increased the salaries of the additional weights and measures inspectors from £325 to £375 p.a.

The North-Eastern County Boroughs Joint Board for the Mentally Defective has decided to adopt, at Prudhoe Hall Colony, from April 1, the rates of pay and

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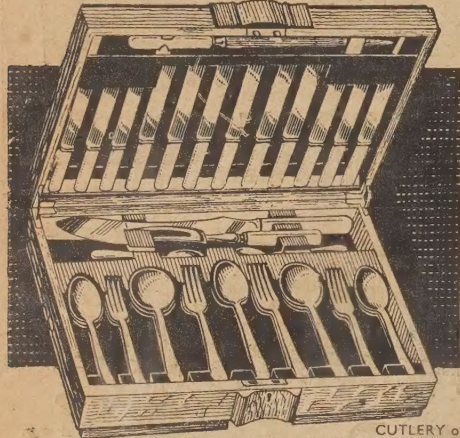
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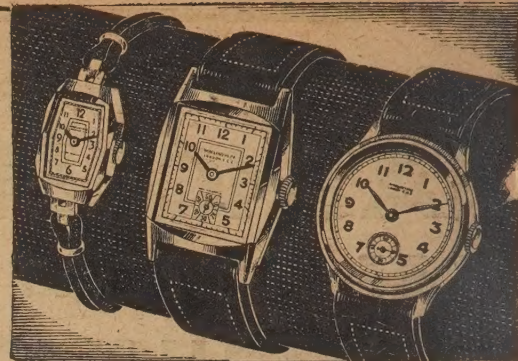
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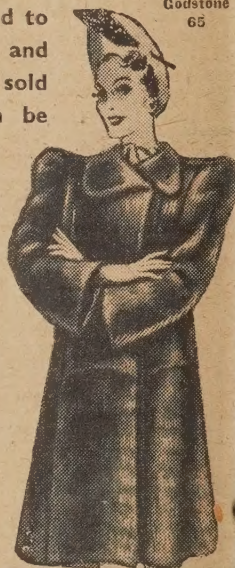
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